

# ANCIENT KASHMIR

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

G. M. RABBANI



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## **THE BOOK**

The book gives a glimpse of the political, Social and Economic conditions prevailing in Ancient Kashmir. It relates the story of rise and fall of various dynasties under Hindu rulers. It also gives an account of the arrival of muslims in the valley as early as the beginning of 8th Century A. D. as traders about a hundred years after Prophet of Islam's Hijrat (migration) from Mecca to Madina. The author has given proof of his critical approach to the subject. It is the result of six-years of his hard core research.

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## PREFACE

Kashmir, is 'Paradise of Indies.'

Since ancient times great Historical, Political, cultural and economic changes have taken place which have left deep impact on the growth and development of society.

This book is a brief account of the Birth, rise and fall of various kingdoms in Kashmir. It will be found useful by the students preparing for various examinations, and by foreigners who are eager to get a glimpse of the past history of our ancestors.

This is my first attempt in this direction and any suggestion for its improvement will be welcome.

I am highly grateful to Sh. Autar Krishan Raina and Sh. Abdul Razak, Chief Librarian's SPS Library, Srinagar who have placed their Libraries at my disposal and have given me constant help. They have full knowledge of source material and books of reference nature, with which they help and guide scholars.

G.M. RABBANI

July 1981

SATHU, Srinagar Kashmir





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Ancient Archaeological site in Kashmir





Ancient site







## CHAPTER I

# The Land and its People

The territory of Jammu and Kashmir is a "White Foot-print" set in a mass of black mountains. The valley of Kashmir is known to us as 'Kashir'. Perched securely among the Himalayas at an average height of about 6,000 feet above the Sea, it is approximately 84 miles in length and twenty to twenty-five miles in breadth. North, East and West range after range of mountains guard the valley from the outer world while in the South it is cut off from the Punjab by rocky barriers, fifty to seventy five miles in width.

It has been our custom to describe our valley as an oval plain girt with chain of mountains. Much has been written since Dr. Bernier (the first European traveller to Kashmir,) told the world of our "Kashmir, the paradise of Indies." In their language the valley is 'an emerald set in pearls as a Land of Lakes, clear streams, green turf, magnificent trees and mighty mountains—where the air is cool and the water sweet, where men are strong and women vie with the soil in fruitfulness. In the introduction of Raj Tarangni (River of Kings), Kalhan pandit says of the valley, 'it is a country where the sun shines mildly being the place created by Kashaypa as if for his glory's High School houses, the saffron iced water and grapes which are rare even in heaven are common here'.

The old name of Satisaras was replaced by Ka-Samira that may be taken to mean (land) from which water (Ka) has been drained off by wind (Samira). According to another interpretation, Kashmir is a prakrit compound with its components. Kas meaning a Channel and mir meaning a mountain. Kashmir could thus mean a rock trough. In its configuration, Kashmir is a deep trough (84×20 to 25 miles with rocky walls. This is one theory.

There is another theory that Kashmir or (Kashir) was so-called on account of the settlement of a race of men called Kash who were a semitic tribe and founded what are now called the



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cities of Kash, Kashan and Kashghar—as yet to be investigated. In that case, the origin of the word Kashmir from Kash, the race and 'IR' a suffix like an and ghar will permit the belief that Kasia Region and the Kasia montes of Ptolemy beyond Mount Imans were inhabited by this same race of Kash whose domination at the same period probably extended from Kashghar to Kashmir in both of which they have left their name.

Kashmir is ancient and in the words of Stein (DR.) linguistic science can furnish no clue to its origin nor even analyse its formation, the earliest mention is made by the Greek Geographer Herodotus (549-486 B.C) that the city of Kaspatyar is situated where the river Indus becomes navigable and Kashpayors as tribe living on the banks of the Indus. Herodotus (484-431-B.C) calls Kashmir by the name of Kaspatyros. The Greek explorer Skylax along with his companions set out and sailed towards the East from Paktyaka (Pakhlee-Modern Hazara) a tract immediately contiguous to Kashmir on the West and lying towards the upper part of the navigable course of Indus. It is therefore clear that "the city of Caspatyros was known to Persians and Greeks in the East of modern part of Kashmir. It is called Shei-mi in the descriptions of To Yong and Sung Yan (578 A.D). Hsien Tsang, Chinese visitor calls it Kia-Shi-Mi-Lo. Kasperia or Kashmir is mentioned as a Province of Menandar's home kingdom. It is called by the same name, that is Kasperia by Ptolemy also (middle of the second century). A Greek poem Dionysiaca or Barika written about the beginning of 5th century A.D. by Nanos, a native of Panolis in Egypt mentions Caspeiri as Kashmir while Stephanus from the same refers to Kashmir as Kaspitroia.

Chinese call Kashmir Kipin while Tibetans call Kashmir Khe-Che-Yul or Khachhul and its native including Ladakhis Khachhe-pa. Gilgites use the word Kashmir both for the people and the country. The earliest Chinese reference to Kashmir is dated 541 A.D. which calls the valley Ku-Shih-Mio. The name of Kashmir has been used as the sole designation of the country throughout its known history.

Kashmir once enjoyed a great fame as the seat of the original paradise of the human race. It is, therefore, significant to learn from Dr. H. De Terra and T.T. Paterson that Kashmir

and the adjoining plains contain all the essential data for a study of early man in southern Asia. And it is from Kashmir that the first evidence of a Himalayan Iceage has been forthcoming. Even though Kashmir may not be the original paradise, it is certainly regarded as one of the most blessed spots up on the earth.

In fact, it forms an isolated world by itself wherein one is inclined to think each spot the most beautiful of all, perhaps because each, in some particulars, excels the rest. The country with which Kashmir is apt to be compared, is Switzerland.

Kashmir has been shortened into Kashir by us in our own tongue. Dards call it Kashrat. We can trace back its continued use through an unbroken chain of documents for more than twenty three centuries while the name is itself undoubtedly far more ancient. We pronounce it Kashir which according to Dr. Stien is the direct phonetic derivative of Kashmir with the loss of m. The language of the inhabitants of Kashmir is Koshur

The first authentic information concerning Kashmir which appears to have reached Europe was through the Portuguese, whose religious zeal prompted them to promulgate Christianity among the natives. We attach little credit to the tales we are told of their king marching to the relief of Porus, when he was attacked by Alexander the great, but now it is quite certain that Kashmir was unknown till the subjects of Portugal first trod its valleys. The Story runs that Mr. Jerome Xavier, a priest of high birth is supposed to be the first European who had the glory or the courage to penetrate to this remote region. Xavier was the first to diffuse the light of Christian truth throughout the East. Jerome Xavier appeared in the Moghal court at Agra and accompanied Akbar to Kashmir. The next traveller as already mentioned was Dr. Francis Bernier. He accompanied Aurangzeb to Kashmir. His travels were published in 1670 A.D. after his return from Kashmir.

Another important visitor to Kashmir was father Desideri, a Jesuit. His observations are contained in a letter published in 1716 A.D. When in the year 1783 A.D. came George Forster, a civil servant in the East India company. Kashmir had then become a part already of Afganistan under Ahamad Shah Abdali. During his son's reign Azad Khan governed Kashmir.

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Other noted visitors are Mr. William Moorcroft, G.T. Vigne, Baron Von Hugel, Dr. Henderson, Victor Jacquemont and Baron Ericvon Shonberg. All of them visited Kashmir during the first quarter of the 19th Century (under Sikh Rule). The reader will find brief references of these visitors in relevant extracts.

Greek poets have immortalized their native country with its purple hills and varied contour, its dancing seas and clear blue sky. But Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece. Sir Francis Younghusband writes (Kashmir) "it has the same blue sky and brilliant sunshine, but its purple hills are on a far grander scale, and if it has no sea, it has lake and river, and the still more impressive snowy mountains. It has too, greater variety of natural scenery, of field, and forest of rugged mountains and open valleys." And to me, continues Younghusband, who have seen both countries, "Kashmir seems much the more likely to impress by its natural beauty." To Mr. Vigne, the glens, glades, forests and streams of Kashmir are truly alpine. Moreover, there is no place where one can see complete circle of snowy mountains surrounding a plain of about 1,900 square, miles. On account of its position in the higher Himalaya Kashmir is the Indian Piedmont.

#### **The Legend of the valley**

The valley of Kashmir, according to the legend, was originally a dead sea-the abode of a demon (Jalodhbava water-born), who lived in the immense sea (Satisiras). Kashyap, the grandson of Brahma, prayed for the deliverance of human beings who were killed by the demon for feasting. Distressed at the havoc caused by Jalodhava and his imps, Kashyap, the Saint, devoted himself to religious exercises, in consequence of which the Hindu Triad, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva appeared to aid him. They found that Indra (the thunder god) and other gods had attempted to annihilate the demons on several previous occasions and had succeeded in destroying not a few, but the majority of the demons had escaped by hiding under water. Vishnu assuming the form of Varaha (boar), struck the mountains at Varahamul (modern Baramula) with his tail and cut up the remaining obstacles with his teeth. The waters of the lake rushed out, but the demon



took refuge in the low ground near present Hariparvat hill Srinagar. The Goddess Sharika disguised as a Myna dropped a pebble on the demon (Jalodbhava). The pebble grew into a mountain (present Hariparvat) and the demon was buried under it, the smaller demons lost heart and the drained lake gradually became inhabited in summer. In Winter the people migrated to the warmer regions of the South, leaving Kashmir to the demons. One Winter, an aged Brahman remained behind, and hid himself in mountain cave. He was seized by the demons and carried off to a place now named as Nilanag (the lord of Serpents) where he was thrown into the lake (Nilanag blue spring is an oval sheet of water 100 yards by 20 yards and 14 yards deep is situated in Gogji pathar village about 4 miles West of Charari-Sharif which is 20 miles from Srinagar. Nilanag is sacred to Brahmins of Kashmir. Dr. Stein believes Nilanag is present day Vernag in Shahabad-Dooru (Anantnag district). Its water is exquisitely clear, The Brahman sank to the bottom but to his astonishment he found it to be really a palace in which the king, Nila Nag (Saint Kashyap's Grand Son) sits on his throne. He sought audience of this king and laid a complaint before him of the rough treatment which he had received at the hands of demon. The king was moved and presented him "Nilamat-Puran" (The Nilamat or the teachings of Sage Nila, the chief of the Nagas is the oldest extant written record which deals with the holy legends regarding the origin of Kashmir and its sacred places (Tirthas). This is one of the main sources of information used by Kalhan pandit when writing his Rajatarangini. He refers to it as the book of rites and festivals prescribed by Nila for Kashmirians. Professor Buhler believes that the Nilamat-puran in its present form could not be older than the sixth or seventh century A.D. The book has now been brought up to date by Messrs J. D. Zadoo, R.L. Kanjilal and Ved Kumari (Profs. of Sanskrit) for his guidance, assuring him that, if he obeyed the precepts of that book and made the offerings therein prescribed, the demon would cease to trouble them. In the spring, he was restored to the dry land. He carried his instructions and imparted them to others. The result was that, from that time, people were able to remain in Kashmir during the Winter.

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### **Stone age in Kashmir**

It has been held by many that there was no stone age in Kashmir. Recent finds, however, of agricultural implements, tumuli, standing megaliths and prone monoliths, made after careful search at pandrethan, Takht-i-Sulaiman, (Shandera-Chyara) Vendrahom, Naran Nag and Arhom in Kashmir seem to establish the existence of such an Age.

### **The Aryans**

Then came the wave of Aryan invasion from the North west of India, including Kashmir. They mixed with the aborigines and formed one people. Kashmiris form a branch of the race which brought the languages of the Indo-Aryan type into India, is a fact established by the evidence of their language and physical appearance. Several races came into Kashmir later on, the earliest were the Aryan settlers who spoke Sanskrit from the Punjab and other parts of India. Dr Grierson has come to this conclusion that Kashmiri has a Dardic base. The common ancestors of the Indo-Aryans have come down from the Oxus valley and settled in the Khokand and in the passes of the Hindukush and the Kabul valley and hence in the northern plains India especially in the Punjab and in the Indo gangetic plain some of the Aryans settled in the pamir regions and they now speak Ghalchah.

Many of the Indo-Aryans through Iran settled in what is now called Dardistan. The word Dard is an ancient one and is of frequent occurrence in the early Sanskrit geographical works and puranas. "The Greeks and Romans, says Sir George Grierson are included in the Dard country the whole mountainous tract between the Hindu Kush and the frontiers of India. The Aryan languages spoken in this region are, therefore called Dardic. They are Kafir, Chitrali, Shina, Kashmiri and Kohistani (Grierson, Linguistic Survey of India). It is therefore evident that settlement of the Aryans in the valley from the North can be proved from the linguistic movement. Ethnological and physically Kashmiri are allied to the people living in the regions of Chitral, Gilgit, Afghansitan and Punjab.

Dards have managed to maintain their independent status till the middle of the last century when Maharaja Gulab Singh and his son, Maharaja Ranbir Singh brought them under their sway. Before conversion to Islam, the Dards were followers of Buddhism and even to this day traces of Buddhist influences can be found in most of their customs and rituals. The Kashmiri cultural influences extended to this region and beyond is now amply proved by the recent discovery in this part of the country of birth bark manuscripts in the Kashmiri Sharda script. They are now sunni and Shias of Islam. Dr. Leitner who visited Dardistan in 1866 writes :

“Whether we judge from language or from physiognomy, the conclusion is inevitable that the Dards are an Aryan race.” (Dardistan). Ethnography of the area around the valley can be traced from the Rajatarangini. In the South and West the adjacent hill regions were occupied by Khasas (Khakhas) and Bombas their neighbours. It is probable that the Karnah district was under their control in ancient times. The old Kishna Ganga valley (now Neelam valley in Pak-held Kashmir, was peopled by Dards, is mentioned by Kallan pandit as the neighbours of Kashmir on the North. Their seats extended then upto North-West where they are now found in Chitral. Yasin, Gilgit and the intervening region towards Kashmir. Magasthenes, the Greek Ambassador in the court of Chandergupta-Mauraya has mentioned upper Indus regions in his book, ‘Indica’.

In the North-East and East of Kashmir the areas are held by the Tribes known to us as Bhauttas. They are the Bhauttas of Dras, Zaskar, and Ladakh and neighbouring districts. Several races entered into Kashmir later, from earliest times their have been periods when the people came into contact with Indian, Roman, Greek and Iranian civilisations resulting in a happy blending of cultures at once tolerant and sympathetic towards the ideas and beliefs of others. The Kashmiris demonstrated it practically. Brahmanism replaced the earliest forms of Naga worship, there was the least religious persecution. On the other hand Nagas are even to this day venerated by the general public in various springs.



**Geological Proof**

In prehistoric times, the basin of Kashmir contained a lake much larger than that of today. The sand-stone rock at the Western corner of the basin, according to these earlier observations, seems to have been rent by some cataclysm followed by attrition; and the lake was drained by the deepening of the Varahmul (Baramulla) gorge, which was the result of the slow process of erosion by water, and which must have taken thousands of years to accomplish. At that time the climate was so cold, and water snows were so heavy and lasted so long, that the country could be inhabited only in summer by nomads who migrated southward in winter. The climate became temperate, and Kashmir came to be the abode of a permanent and prosperous agricultural community. In this connection, Fredic Drew has said that "the traditions, of the natives-traditions that can be historically traced as having existed for ages-end in the direction of the Vale having been occupied by a lake, and these have usually been considered to corroborate the conclusions drawn from the observed phenomena. Agreeing as I do with the conclusion, I cannot count the traditions as perceptibly strengthening it; I have little doubt that they themselves originated in the same physical evidence that later travellers have examined."

Geologists like Montgomerie have proved that the alluvial deposits filling up the basin of Kashmir were held by the earlier geologists to have been formed from the waste of the surrounding mountains. and to have been laid down at the bottom of a great lake. It has been stated that these deposits once covered the whole valley to a height of one thousand fifty feet above its present level; and that the greater portion has been carried away by the Jhelum to the plains of the Punjab. The Wular Lake which now measures 10 miles in length and 5 miles in breadth was regarded as a lost relic of the great expanse of water which once covered all Kashmir.

**Are we jews**

The people of the Valley of Kashmir are physically fine race, the man being tall and well-built. They are an ancient race with complexions varying from olive to a ruddy and fair hue. The features of all are well-shaped and regular. Lively and intelligent,

the people of the Valley are full of fun and fond of amusement. The beauty of their women has been long and much extolled. Dr. Bernier says in this connection, 'the beauty of Kashmir has surpassed my warm imagination that had ever anticipated.'

Most of the people today are mislead and give fantastic theories that we (Kashmiris) are descendants of Jews or the lost tribes of Israel which has not been proved as correct. Kalhan Pandit and other Muslim chroniclers are silent. There is no authentic record evidently available to establish the existence of any large Jewish or rather Hebrew element in Kashmir. Some suggest that by the Jewish cut our features resemble Jews, so we are descendants of Jews. Such preposterous ideas are not acceptable. Even Sir Walter Lawrence, First Settlement Commissioner in Kashmir and Sir Francis Younghusband without any research mentioned Jewish cast of faces among men, women and children. Lawrence says that the hooked nose is a prominent feature and the prevailing type is distinctly Hebrew. Sir Francis says that I should admit without much authority that these Kashmiris are the lost tribes of Israel. — I can see everywhere in Kashmir Biblical types of men in the up land villages. Bernier (Dr.) was hardly less definite. He said on entering the kingdom (Kashmir) after crossing the Pir-Panjal mountains. Inhabitants in the frontier villages struck me as resembling Jews. Their countenance and manner and that indescribable peculiarity which enables a traveller to distinguish the inhabitants of different nations, all seemed to belong to that ancient people. You are not to ascribe what I say to mere fancy the Jewish appearance of these villagers having been remarked by our Jesuit Fathers and by several other Europeans, long before I visited Kashmir. The names of Rahim Joo. Lassaju and Ahmadju have imagined that the bearers of these names were of Jewish nationality. The writer does not accept Bernier's theory which does not hold good. In Kashmir the suffix of Ju or Joo is usually given as marks of respect. The honorific of Ju or Ji is a direct phonetic derivative of Arya which also mean a gentlemen.

Abu Raihan al-Biruni (973—1048 A. D.) 'accompanied the expedition of Mahmud of Ghaznavi against Kashmir, probably in 1021 A. D. the expedition being unsuccessful on account

of the valorous defence by Kashmirians and heavy snowfall. Al-Biruni, however utilized every opportunity during his long stay at Ghazna and in the Punjab (1017-30) for collecting information on Kashmir. Writing more than a century before Kalhana, about the inhabitants of Kashmir, Al-Biruni says "They are particularly anxious about the natural strength of their country and therefore take always much care to keep a stronghold upon the entrances and roads leading into it. In consequence, it is very difficult to have any commerce with them. In former times they used to allow one or two foreigners to enter their country, particularly Jews but at present do not allow any Hindu whom they do not know personally to enter much less other people."

Even the possibility of Jewish admixture in Afghan blood has been suspected. As already noted the researches of Sir George Grierson prove that the Kashmiri Language belongs to the Dardic, which is influenced by Sanskrit and in turn has influenced the present Kashmiri language. The language spoken in Kashmir is not called Kashmiri by us but Koshur and the land Kashir. Therefore it is proved that Kashmiri race is Aryan and not Jewish.

## THE DISTRICTS AND TEHSILS

The Valley of Kashmir, with which the writer is concerned has three districts, 1. Anantnag (Islamabad), 2. Pulwama, 3. Srinagar, The Anantnag district has Tehsils 1. Anantnag, 2. Shahbad Daru, 3. Kulgam, Pahelgam, 4. Bijbehara. & 5. Pulwama Srinagar. district has five tehsils 1. Srinagar, 2. Badgam 3. Chudar 4. Berwa 5. Gandarbal. Baramulla district has Tehsil 1. Baramulla (Varamul) 2. Uri 3. Kupwara 4. Handwara formerly known as Utter machi pura. 5. Sopore. 6. Bandipur.

These tehsils constitute the Kashmir Valley proper. In old times the valley of Kashmir has been divided into two principle administrative divisions known by these modern names-Kamraz and Maraz. The terms have been referred in Sanskrit texts as Kramrajya and Madavarajya found frequently in Raj Tarangni.



at the Shergarhi palace, Srinagar. Abul Fazal's 'Aini Akbari' informs us that the whole kingdom was divided under its ancient rulers in to two divisions, Maraz in the east and Kamraz in the west. He then proceeds to tabulate thirty eight parganas in to which Kashmir was divided under Akbar's administration. The city of Srinagar was counted in Maraz and those below it Kamraz upto 1948 A.D. During the 10th century a third mountain district called Lohara was added under Lohara dynasty. This territory has left its name to the present valley of Loharin comprising the mountain district immediately adjoining Kashmir valley in the South-west and now included in Poonch and Rajuri districts of Jammu province. A village Loran is extant in Poonch Tehsil. Lokprakash tells us some of the divisions of Kashmir into twenty seven tehsils and enumerates some nineteen of the latter. But several of these are so corrupt as to be beyond recognition when others bear a distinctly modern look.

Abul Fazal's account is the first which presents us with systematic statement of Kashmir parganas. It is of special interest because it shows how their list could be increased or re-adjusted within certain limits according to fiscal requirements or administrative forces. According to him old number of parganas was thirty-eight while the earlier one of Qazi Ali was Forty one then these were changed during Mughals and Pathans. After the conquest of the valley by the Sikhs in 1819 they reduced these to thirty-six and changed their names and extent as observed by William Moorcroft in 1819, and Hugel (Baron Von) in 1835. Then under Dogra rule the tehsils were again re-distributed after the fashion of British provinces and their number was eleven. But in their constitution little regard was paid to the historical division of the country. From the Lokaprakash, it is evident that ancient Kashmir possessed a far greater population. It helps us to explain the curious traditional verse which puts the number of villages in pre-historic



times 66063. Even much later during 16th century Mirza Haidar records that in the whole province--plains and mountainous-together are comprised 1,00,000 villages. Zonarja gives figure 60,000. The decline began in the later Mughal and Pathan periods. However there is a mention of nineteen Visayas (tehsils) including Lohara district. The reason is I believe, villages became deserted due to appalling famines and epidemics which brought terrible havoc in the mass of rural population. During Muslim rule it appears that Srinagar was the chief city of Maraj and Sopor the headquarters of Kamra.

## POPULATION

The population of the Valley of Kashmir according to the census of 1971, was 34,000,00 of which 94% were Muslims 3% Pandits 2% Sikhs and rest are Christians in small number. The shape of the valley is like an oval or more precisely a boot-shaped bowl. From the foot of the Neelam (Kishanganga) watershed to the south east corner beyond Anantnag (Islamabad) the floor of the Valley is built of little-consolidated lake beds and alluvial soils. The greatest portion of this area which is approximately over 2,000 square miles, exhibits silts and sands into which the Jhelum and its tributaries have carved a relief of varying character.

The Brahmans of the Valley are known as Kashmiri Pandits. They form a distinct class of their own and are considered to be the purest specimen of the settlers in the Valley. They have studied Sanskrit and Persian languages and have always gained this as traditional occupation namely government service which was held by them throughout ancient and medieval periods and Sikh rulers. They regained their respect and prestige and were classed as Malmasi and Bhanmasi. The Malmasi observe the lunar and the Bhanmasis the solar form of astronomical calendar. They however have no restriction with regard to inter-marriage, etc. The Karkuns or government servants having given up the study of Sanskrit in favour of Persian employed their daughters, eldest sons as their priests

who were called Bachibhats. In course of time the Karkuns and Bachibhats became two sub-castes, intermarriage between the two being restricted. The Kashmiri Pandits are divided into 133 exogamous gotras, each member of which claims to be a decendent of a rishi whose name the gotra bears. Generally, the social position is determined by the nature of occupation followed, by the gotra. Those who have been employed in superior state service since two or three generations hold their heads high above others.

Although claiming to be the off spring of rishis and belonging to the highest branch of Brahmans the Saraswats, Kashmiri Pandits take meat freely in strange contrast to observance of strict vegetarianism by the Brahmans all over India. This small community is highly advanced in education more than 75% of their members being literate. Their chief occupation is government service. In India many well-known administrators and politicians have been Kashmiri Pandits. It will not be out of place to mention the names of Pandits of Kashmir who have proved beaconlight in India like Sir Tej Bhadur Saproo, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Moti lal Nehru, R.S. Pandit, Indira Gandhi, and T.N. Koul (Formerly foreign Secretary). They (Pandits) possess the knack of adapting to changed circumstances at short notice and during the present time are adopting new avenues of profession. In the field of art, philosophy and literature, they have produced a galaxy of authors, savants and saints.

Sikhs are in minority community in Kashmir. Their population is 1% as a whole. Before 1947 they were scattered in the Valley and were concentrated in the Muzaffarabad district. Recent political developments have compelled them to move to the other parts of the state. Most of them were originally Brahmans imported by Raja Sukh Jiwan Mal during the pathan rule in Kashmir and converted them to sikhism. They are hardy people and mostly agriculturists. Recently they have taken to the military and police and transport service of the state.

An overwhelming majority of the people in the valley are Muslims who profess Islam. We hear for the first time of muslims in the reign of Candrapida (711-719 A.D.) and Lalitaditya Muktapida who ruled from 725 to 753 A.D. applying to the chinese Emperor for aid against the muslims who were advanc-

ing from their bases in Sind and Multan, and of whom we hear for the first time in connexion with the history of Kashmir from the *Rajatarangini*. Lalitaditya-Muktapida, of whom we shall write more as Stein says, is misspelt in the Arabic characters as Muttapir. His reign according to the Islamic era dated from 107 to 136 A.H. Muktapida's successor, Vajraditya-Bappiyaka, (754 to 761) "sold many men to Mlechhas (or Muslims) and "who had introduced into Kashmir practices which befitted Mlechhas (or Muslims) Harsha Dev (1089 to 1101 A.D.) known for his anti-Brahman policy, employed Turkish (Turushkas) (Muslims) soldiers. His chief of the Army staff was a Muslim (Madna) or in Kalhan's words as "captains of hundreds." Harsha Dev's rule lasted from 1089 to 1101 A.D. or 482 to 495 A.H. He introduced Muslim influence with elaborate fashions and dress and garment. During the reign of Biksacara (1120-21) Muslim soldiers were recruited and sent on an expedition against Sussal in Lohara (modern Poonch and Rajori). From the account of Morcopolo, the Venetian traveller it can be concluded that Muslims had already settled in the Valley before the end of 13th century. He wrote that the people of valley did not kill birds and animals, and if they wished to take meat, they engaged 'Saracens.' (Muslims), who lived among them to play the butcher. These Saracens could either be the emigrants from far off lands or the converts from among the locals or those who came from the Punjab and the Sindh.

Stein in his introduction to the English version of *Rajatarangni* writes :—

Islam made its way into Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by gradual conversion for which the influx of foreign adventurers both from the South and from Central Asia had prepared the ground.

Evidence which can hardly be set aside as incredible goes to reveal that in 97 A.H. (677 A.D.) a person bearing the name Hamim the son of Sam, a Syrian Muslim accompanied Jaisiya to Kashmir. *He is the first muslim to enter the valley of Kashmir.* The ruler of Kashmir ordered that from among the dependencies of Kashmir, a place called Shakalha should be assigned to Jaisiya. According to General Cunningham, this place may possi-



blty be Kuller-Kahar in the salt range which at that time belonged to Kashmir. Jaisiya died in Shakalha and was succeeded by Hamim son of Sama. Hamim founded masjids there, and obtained great honour and regard. He was much respected by the king of Kashmir. He (king) gave him and his co-religionists (Mellechas) a colony to settle in a part of Srinagar which was known as Malchamar-Ali-Kadal, Srinagar. This occurred in 677 A.D. (97. A.H.). Truly, Says Mr. Kupur, Islam in fact came to exercise its influence on the Kashmir Court from about the middle of 8th century.

In 712 A.D. Mohamad bin Qasim had sent his force to conquer Gandhara region. The Arab troops returned through the southern ravine of Kashmir and subdued some of the tribes bordering on the valley. This is proved by the fact that as already mentioned that the contemporary ruler Chandrapida of Kashmir appealed to the chinese emperor for help as he heard about the approaching of Muslim Army. It is at this time that the chinese emperor became suzeran lord of Kashmir and the foreign policy of Kashmir began to be governed by the chinese emperor.

In 751 A.D. the Arabs compelled the chinese to evacuate Gilgit. Subsequently, under Caliph Mamun (813-33 A.D.) relations with the Tibet and its neighbouring rulers were strengthened by the Arab-Tibetan treaty. These agreements must have affected Kashmir in one way or the other. In the time of caliph Hisham, one Junaid was sent as Governor of the Sindh. He invaded Kashmir but Lalitaditya (Maktapa) was stronger at the time. Hence the Arab attempt at conquest did not bear any result.

Besides these military movements private men seem to have paid sudden and solitary visits to the valley and the areas surrounding it. These adventurers and travellers must have come as a result of the Arab conquest in the south and the north of Kashmir. Writers would not have mentioned in their accounts. The first of these was Ibn Khirdazibah (d. 250 A.H.) he wrote his book *Al-Masalik Wa' Mamalik*. While describing the Indian possession he did not forget to refer to the regions of Kashmir and Gandhara. The visit of Abu Dulf Misar Bin Mihai Yanbu was most significant. He travelled widely and went with a Chinese envoy to China. Among other lands he saw



Tibet, then he moved to Kashmir where from he went to the plains of the Punjab and Sindh. Mohammad bin Ishaq al-Nadim who was benefitted from Yanbu's experiences and also his written accounts which are no more available.

What Misar had seen and recorded was reproduced by the famous writer Abdullah Yaqut in his *Mujam-ul-Buldan*. He spoke of his enjoyment in Kashmir and other places. He has been quoted by Yaqut. He must have gone there when Misar visited the valley.

Then how was Islam introduced in Kashmir? It is a question which will baffle even the adroit among modern researchers who wish to know the antecedents of Islam in Kashmir. The first is how and why Islam became popular in Kashmir, and how it was possible to affect muslims settlements in the valley. There can be more than a couple of answers to the first and second question. The Buddhist-cum-Hindu society had since begun to succumb to stagnation and ritualism. Hieun Tsang, the Chinese scholar, who was on his way to the imperial court of Harsha (607-642 A.D.) visited and stayed in Kashmir sometime in 631-33 A.D. regretted that Buddhism was losing ground. Actually the Hindu rulers of the time were, perhaps carefully striving for a religious and cultural synthesis of the two ancient religions of India. This was purely a Kashmiri experiment which became manifest in the arts of sculpture and architecture. But the outcome of these efforts, even though tolerant was the extinction of Buddhism which owed its disappearance to many other causes varying from violence to the vehicle of the forces of change. But when another Chinese visitor, Ou-K'ong came in 759-63 A.D. he saw Buddhism in an apparently flourishing state. Yet as the decades and scores of years rolled on, Shaivism survived the faith of Budha, and it was the former with which Islam had to deal. As for the earliest colonisation of Kashmir by Muslims, historical evolution had to play its natural role. The original creeds and the communities of the valley had grown so sterile, stale and unresponsive that they needed to be revolutionised. The revolution from within was impossible at the stage. A spark from outside was required to ignite the explosives accumulated in the course of centuries. The spark was provided by the latest and the last of the editions of Prophet Abraham's Faith, the

human adherents of which had taken their position at the gates of this beautiful land (Kashmir). Many local inhabitants and their leaders did not abhor Muslim ways and virtues. Hence the reason why the followers of Islam were accommodated.

As regards the second question—why so speedy a success in Islamicising Kashmir—must needs come to the rescue of the research scholar. Records reveal it that the invasions of the Mongols, one under Zuljoo (Pagan faith) and the other under the command of Qaan, played havoc with the Kashmiri population. Before them, Sultan Mahmud of Gaznavi had attempted at gaining control over the valley but he withdrew from Loharkot which fortress guarded the Tosamaidan pass. His invasions brought with them the ingredients of a culture and civilisation of which Kashmir Valley was deprived for some time. On the other hand, the Mongols were brutes and savages. They devastated peaceful villages and prosperous towns of the valley, killing thousands of innocent civilian with utter disregard for human values. When (Munko) Qaan made inroads into the 'happy Valley', Ramachandra was its ruler. According to Rashid-ud-Din Fazlullah, they repeated the invasion, destroyed the standing crops and houses, looted property and killed old and young indiscriminately. Rama Dev the ruler could not survive catastrophe. He was succeeded by Lakhshman Dev under the orders of Qaan and Halaku Khan. The invasion of Zuljoo and the grandson of Halaku was more damaging, socially, politically and economically. He let loose tyranny and tortured everyone whom his troops (numbering 70,000) captured and whoever came in their way. *It was at this time, when eleven families of Kashmiries survived.* The ruler, Simha Deva, escaped to Kishtwar leaving his subjects to their fate. Luckily, Zuljoo, decided to leave the Valley in the month of November, 1318 A.D. He carried with him 60,000 captives him. While crossing the High Lands of Devsar at Batapora all the Mongols they (were not yet of Muslim faith but remained attached to the Pagan beliefs of their fore fathers) as well as their Kashmiri captives were destroyed in the bitter cold caused by the heavy snow-storm.

The effect of these Mongol invasions was most adverse on the Valley or rather on the Kingdom. Hasan (Gamroo) on the authority of an authentic evidence, bewails the consequences of



loot and destruction.

After the annihilation of these vicious invaders, the survivors in Kashmir came out from their hideouts in the hills and found no relative or friend alive. Only a hundred men were seen living in distress. These men rebuilt their fallen habitations, while there were only eleven families (Persons) who resumed the work of reconstruction in the city. Jonaraj (Zoonaraj) 15th century historian laments and says when the violence caused by the Rakshara Dulchu ceased, the son found not his father nor the father his son, nor did brother meet his brother. Kashmir became almost like a region before the creation, a vast field with men without food and full of grass". It can well be imagined how tragic the aftermath of the terrible calamities could be. In sum, Kashmir was in a hopelese state until, it is claimed, the establishment of a stable Government, infused with the spirit of true Islamic tolerance. However, full prosperity and peace was regained in its actuality in the illustrious reigns of Shabud-Din, Qutub-ud-Din, Sultan Sikandar and Zain-ul-Abidin Budashah.

The effect on the minds of the survivors was deep. The man in the street and the tiller in the country-side felt himself resourceless both materially and spiritually. Disappointed with his lot, he had turned to be depressed within and demoralised without. When tragedies overtake families, they find people to sympathise with them. But there was none to help keep up their spirits. For them, it was the question of how to adjust themselves in bewildering conditions and start the new chapter of their life. They and their immediate forbears had seen much of religious practice and lived according to the tenet of the indigenous religions. In their state of confusion it was Islam and its votaries which came to their succour and freed them from their collective numbness. And as they had already experienced the sweetness of contacts with the Muslims, most of them welcomed to get Islam. But, astonishingly, the process of conversion began with the ruler of the kingdom and not the peoples he ruled. And this by all estimates was a miraculous event in the annals of Kashmir.

As the Mongol hordes entered the Valley, Simha Deva the ruling monarch took refuge in Chota Kashmir (as Kishtwar is



called). His Commander-in-Chief, Ramchandra Raina fortified himself at Gangangir (Lar) with Rinchen and Shah Mirza (the former being a Tibetan Prince and the latter from Swat) who had decided to reside in Kashmir. The Mongol invaders having disappeared from the scene of action, the effects of their violence became manifest. The administration was paralysed there being none to look after public affairs. Following Kalhana and Jonaraja in their chronology, we reach Rinchan or Rinchana during 1320-1323 A or 720 to 724 A.H. which is the terra firma of the advent of Islam as a state religion in Kashmir. In the twelfth century of the Christian era, Stein tells us, the conversion of the Dard tribes on the Indus from Buddhism to Islam had already made great progress. This is about two centuries before Rinchan who becomes Sultan Sadr-ud-Din and the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir.

Islam neither affected the independence of Kashmir nor, at first, materially changed its political and cultural condition. 'The administration' says Stein 'remained, as before, in the hands of the traditional official class, the Brahmans, for whom a change of religion presented no advantage, and the retention of their old creed apparently involved no loss of inherited status. This appears from the frequent reference made in Zonaraja's and Shri Vara's Chronicles, to Brahmans holding high official posts under the early Sultans. Sanskrit continued to be for a considerable period the language of official communication and record in Kashmir after the end of Hindu rule. The various forms of official documents reports etc., which are contained in the Lokaprakash, a handbook of Kashmirian administrative routine are drawn up "in a curious Sanskrit jargon, full of Persian and Arabic words which must have become current in Kashmir soon after the introduction of Islam". The use of Sanskrit, even among Muslamans is borne out by the Sanskrit inscription on a tomb of Sayyid Khan in the cemetery of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Ganj Baksh at the foot of the Hari-parbat (Kohi-maran) in Srinagar. Brief Sanskrit inscriptions without dates have been discovered by Stein on a number of old Muslim tombs at Mazari-salatin (Maharaj-Ganj) and at Martand.

Our social structure was changed due to the advent of Islam. Love and tolerance was maintained. The old order now changed

with the advent of Muslim rule. New values were being set up in art and literature and chain of action and reaction resulted in a slow and inperceptible synthesis of the two fundamentally opposite cultures.

## EXTENT AND BOUNDRIES

Kashmir which is called "Earthly Paradise" or the "the play ground of Asia" covers an area of 1,800 or 1,900 sq. miles is about 84 miles in length from south west to north—east, while its width as already mentioned varies from 20 to 25 miles. It extends from 32 Degrees 17' to 36 Degrees 58' N. and from 73 Degrees 26' to 80 Degree 36' E. Its convenient term is "Kashmir". It includes besides our Valley, the areas of Jammu, Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit, Hunza and Nagar. Kashmir is mostly mountainous, rising in several tiers from the plains in the south to the high altitude Valleys and peaks in the north enclosing the loftiest hamlets in the world.

It is situated in the Western Himalayas at an average height of 6,000 ft. above the sea. It resembles a great irregular oval consisting of a similarly shaped level vale in the centre with a ring of mountains around it.

The mountains surrounding Kashmir consist of three main ranges. The most important of these is the Pir Panjall Range which with a width of fifty to sixty miles, forms the southern and south-western boundary of the Valley. It begins from the southern most part of the country where the Banihal pass, 9,200ft. above the sea, marks the lowest depression in the chain of mountains. After running for about thirty miles from east to west, the range turns to the north-northwest. In this direction it continues for about fifty miles more, and after attaining its greatest elevation in the Tratakut peak (15, 524 ft.) it gradually descends towards the Jhelum Valley.

The next natural division of the state lies between the "Outer Hills" in the south to the lofty mountains ranges dividing the Kashmir Valley from Jammu. These are called the 'Middle Mountains'. It comprises the valleys of Bhadrwah Kishtwar and Padar. There is luxuriant growth of vegetation all over this area.

The forests are rich with silver fir, deodar, spruce, oak and pine. The main crops grown are maize, rice, millet, barley and wheat. Cultivation in this area is dependent on rain which however is not enough for growing rice. Irrigational facilities are now being extended to this part of the state. Unlike the 'Outer Hills' snow falls and on higher elevations it stays long. Among the valleys enclosed by these mountains, Bhadrwah is a place of interest. It stands at a elevation of nearly 5,400 feet above sea level. Its main charm lies in the rich forests abounding in the finest quality of timber. The town is always humming with lumbering activities. Delicious fruit such as apple, pear, mulberry apricot and cherry are grown. Another town of importance is Kishtwar. It is more or less a plateau, about 5,400 feet above the sea. The mountains are coated with forests of deodar, fir and oak which lend charm and majesty to it. The climate is quite pleasant and refreshing. Flowers and plants grow in wild profusion. There are numerous water falls whose aggregate height is estimated to be over 2,500 feet providing a huge power potential. Fruits such as quince, apple, pear, plum, cheery, and grapes grow here. Saffron is also cultivated but it is inferior in quality to that grown at Pampur in the Kashmir Valley.

Padar is a small valley of the Chenab not far from Kishtwar. The valley is rich in minerals. Sapphire mines are located at higher elevations. Other semi-precious stones like beryl and aquamarine and crystals like quartz and felspar are also to be found.

From the 'Middle Mountains' onwards one comes to the region of lofty mountains which enclose the basin-shaped valley of Kashmir which is our main subject. This whole area is included in the Jammu province of our state.

The boundary of the Valley in the north-east is formed by the main Central Himalayan range, which separates the Jhelum and the Indus drainage. The eastern boundary is formed by a high spur of this range which branches at about ten miles east-south-west from the Zoji-La pass and runs due south, its peaks maintaining an elevation of from 12,000 to 14,000 ft.

The mountains which enclose the Valley in the north and north-west, are of great range. A few miles west of the spot from which the eastern boundary spur branches near the Zoji-



La, another minor range branches off. This runs due west for about 100 miles at an elevation of from 1,200 to 1,300 ft. with a breadth varying from twelve to twenty-four miles and forms the northern boundary of the Valley separating Jhelum on the south from its important tributary, the Neelam (old Kishanganga) on the north. After reaching 75 Degree 15E. the ridge gradually curves round to the south until it joins the Kanjanag peak, North-west of Baramula, thus forming the north-western boundary of the valley. The mountain-ring which surrounds valley has only one gap. This is the narrow gorge at (Varahamul) Baramulla through which the Jhelum escapes to the plains of the Punjab, and thence to the sea.

To the south-west was the important hill-state of Rajauri, comprising the valleys drained by the Tohi and its tributaries. On the north-west of Rajauri lay the kingdom of Punch, and to the north-west of Punch is the Jhelum Valley. This was held in olden times as an outlying frontier district of Kashmir, as far as Buliasa. Further to the west lay the district of Pakhli. To the north-west of the Kashmir Valley was situated the tract known as Karnav. Its inhabitants were Khasas, (Khokas) and their chiefs acknowledged the suzerainty of strong Kashmir rulers. To the north lies the Valley of Neelam (Kishanganga) inhabited by the Dard tribes. To the east lies Baltistan and Ladakh inhabited by the people of Tibetan race. Further south along the range on the east of the Valley is situated a long narrow valley known as Maru-Wardwan.

By virtue of its central position in Asia, Kashmir commands a strategic importance touching as it does the borders of Pakistan, Afghanistan Russia and China. It stands on the old Central Asian trade route and the Kashmir Valley has, since ancient times, been the halting place of the caravans travelling between the plains of India and Central Asia, Sinkiang and Tibet.

## ROUTES OF ANCIENT KASHMIR

The roads in ancient Kashmir were not the same as we see these today. Traffic was carried on through rivers and water ways. There were of course thoroughfares along which ponnies, bullocks, palanquins and elephants could pass. Villages were linked by means of foot paths. During the 16th century under Mirza Haidar Dugulat the streets of Srinagar were paved with cut stones. Popular avenues ran from the east to the south of Srinagar.

"Great mountain" barriers, says Kalhan, "had great bearing on the future history of the Valley. These served as great protecting walls. Our land was unconquerable by force of arms". The Chinese travellers, Hiuntsang and Oukong who visited the Valley described the difficulty in crossing the mountains. Alberuni testifies to the same and says that watch stations (Drangas) were maintained at all these passes. An officer with a small contingent of troops was stationed at these places to exercise strict watch over the passes. Nobody was allowed to enter or leave the passes without special pass and permit, 'Khati Rah' "Before the Christian era" says Alberuni, "only the Jews were allowed to enter the Valley". During the medieval times the feudal chiefs (Maliks) were responsible for guarding these routes. The fortified posts were known as Rehdari Chowkis. Those who were allowed to enter had to have a pass called Parvana Rehdari. It also served as an important check on unauthorised emigration. This system continued up to the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the second Dogra ruler. These watch stations are still existent on these passes and the principle routes which lead to the Valley and the neighbouring territories are referred to in indogenous literature and also in the accounts of foreign travellers. Trade and commerce were carried on with other countries through these routes.

The most notable and important route to ancient Kashmir was the Bahsala (Banihal route). The Banihal range runs 35 miles from the east to the west and continues 50 miles after attaining an elevation of 15,524 feet from the sea level from the peak called Tratkut. This route was convenient for communication with Jammu and Himachal Pradesh. A great fort was

built at Banihal (Bansala) which existed at the time of Kalhan (1148 A. D.) and was known as "Bansala Castle". Here a pretender Bashkisara was captured and killed when he tried to invade the valley. Banihal is the only all-weather route across the pir panchal range. It was remodelled by Dr. A. Mitru under Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1910 and was maintained as a private route upto 1922, when it was opened to the public. It is at present National Highway.

After proceeding a little further there is a very perilous route which is crossed through a great height of 14,000 known as the Budil pass or the Saidov pass (Siddhapatha). It connects Srinagar with Akhnoor and Sialkot in the Punjab. It is maintained even now as a track but owing to its shortness it was formerly a favourite route with Kashmiris. Saidov is the first village on the Kashmir side, two miles south of *Shopian*. Beyond it lies the Darhal pass. About five miles to the north of this pass, we reach the lowest dip of the range in the South-west of Shopian at a height of 14,000 ft. This is the oldest route known as "old Moghal route". It was a prominent route since ancient times and connects the valley with rest of the Indian subcontinent. At its opening a great town was built by king Awanti Verman's minister, Sura, in the ninth century which is called Hura-pur now. While crossing the pass the king lost 101 elephants and the whole mountain therefore is called Hasvan (elephant's mountain). He brought 50,000 Brahmans from Gandhara and settled them in the valley. He was a follower of Shiva. The Mughal rulers often used this route for their visit. Mr. Bernier, the first European traveller to Kashmir accompanied Aurangzeb through this route. The Mughal rulers built inns at various places along this route. Prophet's holy relief 'hair' was brought to Srinagar by Abdullah Ishbari in 1699 A. D. (1111 A. H) Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried to invade the valley in 1814 A. D. through this route but his attempts were foiled by the Afghan defenders.

It was the ancient salt route through which salt was imported into the valley from the Punjab salt ranges. Many of the present villages on the way have existed for centuries. Thus Rajuri, Baharam Gull were important for providing refuge to those who fled from Srinagar on account of political troubles.



Proceeding further west along the same range we find another important route known as the Tosa Maidan Road. There are three more passes adjacent to it namely Sanga Safed, Nurpur, Corgali; all of them difficult to cross. Only the Tosa Maidan route was an important line of communication, Owing to its natural advantages it was the shortest and the safest route to Poonch (Lohara) connecting the valley with the Punjab. Mohd. of Gaznavi tried to invade Kashmir through this route in company with Al-Beruni but failed to reach Kashmir in 1021 A.D. At times when the Mughal route was closed on account of heavy snow the Tosa-Maidan route was used. If Al-Beruni is to be believed, brisk trade was carried on along this route. Some sort of communication must have existed between Kashmir and South India. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was successful when he attempted to invade Kashmir in 1819 A.D. The portion of Sikh army led by him in person safely reached the Tosa Maidan plateau. Its importance has also been mentioned by Kalhana to his chronicles. The route started from the mountains of Berue where there was a watch station and custom chowki which existed upto the 19th century. Ruined towers of the fort are still extant. Then the chief and the most notable route was through the Jhelum valley known as the Varamullah-Gandhar route. The route served as a royal route under the Kushans but in medeaval times this route was rendered difficult on account of the hill-men known as Khokhas and Bombas, who often raided Baramullah and Srinagar. After the conquest of Kashmir by the Sikhs of the Punjab, they erected the forts and brought these turbulent tribes under control. Their (Khokhas) last raid on Srinagar was in 1856 A. D. Huein Tsang, the Chinese scholar and traveller, entered the valley through this route and was received by the King of Kashmir (Durlubvardhan) at Barmullah Ushkar (Havishkapur) in 631 A.D. The route was difficult and risky owing to the narrow valley with difficult ravines. The route attained eminence under the Afghans (pathans) who ordered its remodelling thereby affording the shortest and the least exposed line of communication between Kabul and Kashmir, when the latter was under the control of Kabul rulers. Kalhan calls it, the 'Gandhara route'. The route started from Varamull (Baramullah-Havishkapur, present Ushkur village). Lalitaditya

ied expeditions to central Asia through this route. During the Afghan and Sikh rule the route had commercial and military importance. Close to Baramulla there stood once a watch station (Dranga) where a strict check was exercised over the persons on entering or leaving the valley. The village is still known as Dranghabal. (1½ miles away from proper Baramullah at present). During the Buddhist rule various viharas were built on the route, such as at Kitsam and Khadanyar villages where travellers and pilgrims could stay. During this period there was a constant movement of people from central Asia to Kashmir via this route. Kalhan mentions that Avantiveman's son led an expedition to Hazara through this route and was killed on the way. Alberuni gives a detail description of this route in his 'Kitabul-Hind' and says this was the best known entrance to Kashmir.

With the dawn of present century, the Jhelum valley road was built and opened for wheeled traffic. The road was joined with Murree at Kohalo 132 miles from Srinagar and was life line of the valley up till the opening of Banihal cart road in the year 1922, when it was thrown open to the public. After 1947 when the subcontinent of India was partitioned, the major portion of the Road came under the control of Pakistan and is therefore closed these days beyond Uri 70 miles from Srinagar pending the settlement of Kashmir dispute.

Along this route there was another which connected the valley through the Kajrag peak (present Baramullah district) to the upper Kishen-Ganga. (Neelam) Pt. Kalhan calls this route 'Sharda route'. The territory between the Kajrag and the Kishen-Ganga was a tributary to the ruler of Kashmir. There stood on the Kishen Ganga an ancient Shrine of the Goddess Sharda. Pilgrims from the valley and other parts of India often used this route to pray at Sharda. Colonies of Afridis were settled to guard the passes. Proceeding along the east there ran one more important route which connects the upper Kishen Ganga with the valley. It started at Bandipora, in the Matrigam, village, known as the Gurais road leading to Atsore, Gilgit and Baltistan. The road was improved by the British engineers during the 19th century and was called the 'Gilgit transport road' crossing the range of Tragbal (9000 ft) about the sea level and Razdhani pass. Pt. Kalhan refers in several passages to the hill forts built



during the ancient times which guarded the mountain routes leading to the valley from invasions of the Dards. The watch station and the fort was known as Dud gutta and was in-charge of Canpaka, father of our master historian Pt. Kalhan in the reign of Harshdev. (1089 A.D.) Oukong, the Chinese Scholar traveller, who visited the valley in 759 A.D. calls it the 'Gate of the North'. In ancient times this route must have served as a second line of communication with China and central Asia. Beyond this route in the eastern range called Harmukh (Harmukhta) there is a pass known generally by its Tibetan name Zojila. It was an important thoroughfare in connecting the valley with Ladakh, Tibet and Sinkiang (China). Pt. Kalhan calls it 'Bhautta land route'. It was through this route that Zalju (Zul-kadar Khan), the Monghol, invaded Kashmir in 1318 A.D., in whose time only eleven families have survived in Kashmir. This route is important because it is through this route that in the beginning of 14th Century, the son of Ladakhi chief Lachen Gayaldu, Rinchan, (after conversion to Islam) the first Muslim ruler, brought the downfall of the Hindu empire in Kashmir. Mirza Haider Daghlat, with his small force entered the valley in 1532 A.D. and established his rule, which lasted for more than a decade. This route must have played a great part in the political, cultural and commercial intercourse between Tibet and Kashmir. Then in the South there was one more route connecting the valley with Kashtiwari (known as little Kashmir). This route never played any important role in foreign relations, or trade except during the rule of pathans, when it served as an exit for the inhabitants of the valley during famines. This route is known as Marbal route (11,570 ft.) After crossing the pass Wardwan and Chinab (ancient Chandrabagha) are crossed by bridges under construction these days. The route is generally closed in winter due to heavy snow-fall.

At Gurais on Gilgit transport road, there is one more route which leads across Kamri pass (13,000 ft.) to Astor and Gilgit. At Burzul, the last halting place on this side of water shed two roads part, the one leads to North East across Deosai plateau to Skardu.



**Rivers of the valley**

Description of the valley is not complete unless some mention is made of its useful river Jhelum known as Hydaspes of the ancient Greeks and Bidaspas to Ptolemy, corruption of the Sanskrit name Vitasta to our ancients, Behat to medeaval Sultan and to us (Kashmiris) as Vyath derived from Vithavutur. Vyath our word for Jhelum, is the direct phonetic derivation of the ancient Sanskrit Vitasta i.e. (coming through a fissure in the hill meaning Vitastar span). The name Jhelum is of Muslim origin as Alberuni calls it Jhelum implying slowness. Shrivara when relating an expedition of Sultan Haider Shah into the Punjab Sanskritizes this name into Jyalami. Another version connects the river Jhelum with the place Vitastatra where king Ashoka erected stupas. This is the modern Vithavutur, a small village one mile north-west of Vernag. When it leaves Baramullah it is called Kashur Darya and after the distance of 80 miles at Domel it drains Neelam (Kishen Ganga), the northern rivers of Kashmir basin in Gurais, Telail and Skardu. It is spoken as Jhelum river.

Vernag is the reputed source of Jhelum, and the blue waters give life to the valley. It is the spring of the Ver which is the name of the pargana called Shahabad (Duru) from the days of shahjehan. The spring was originally a shapeless pond and water oozing out from different places in it, spread about and formed a little marsh. Jehangir built the Octagonal tank of Sculptures. It is ten feet deep and was constructed in 1612 A.D. To the Brahmans of the valley it is sacred and is known as Nila Kund or Nilanagh. From Vernag to Khanabal spring water flows into a small stream of 16 miles where a hen can cross at some places. It is the Lidder from the lake Sheshnagh flowing through the Pahalgam valley which branches off into several streams and forms parganas of Dachhanpur and Khovarpur and meets Jhelum at the village Gur below Khanabal Sandran, a small stream flows from Brang valley, the Arapat stream from Kothar Kukarnagh (Bandu Zalangam) and Achabal spring water join the river just near and above Khanabal. From Khanabal to Baramulla the river becomes navigable for fifty four miles. Further north the "Jhelum behaves like a clever financier building its capital on the wealth of others. The river Jhelum is a

tributary river par-excellance". Further down on the right bank the river receives a channel water of the great Arapalnag (Tral valley) at Charsu village near Avantipur, and catchment areas of wastervan hills and the mountains above Tral, At Pampur (ancient Padamapur) a small amount of water from irrigation channels of Khrew and Balahom villages falls into the river above Joinerry mills. In the city Jhelum is joined by a stream which drains the lake to the east of the city. The lake is Dal, which is fed by the plentiful streams and springs of the Mahadev and Zabervan hills. The Water flows out towards Jhelum by a canal which is Tsunthkul (ancient Mahasarit). The canal passes through embankment called sathu Sadiqazi (Burbarshah) which protects the old city and low shores of the Dal from floods of the river. The bund was originally built by king Parversen in 7th Century from Drugjan to Kralkhud HabbaKadal and again it was raised by Mohd Qasim. Qazizada, a poet in the Moghal court. The lock gate of the Dal lake was built in 1938 A. D. afresh at Drugjan (ancient Durgagalika). Tsunth Kul joins Jhelum at Dubjit Ghat, Gow Kadal opposite to the old secretariate building (formerly shergarhi palace). The Dal water flows through Koshal sar and anchor lake and joins at Shadipur (shahabudin pur). At Gow Kadal, Jhelum branches off to the left side and is known as Kutakul (ancient Kapistika) which rejoins the Jhelum river at Watal Kadal and Chachbal through Nawabazar and S.M. H.S. Hospital Srinagar through its one more branch known as Sonar Kul (below KaniKadal) and passes through sayyed Monsor Ziyyarat.

The Sind river joins at Shadipur, the place of marriage of the two rivers. It is an important tributary of the Jhelum. The traditional source of the Sind is the sacred lake known as Gangabal on the Harmukh mountains. The head waters emerge at Zojila and Amarnath peak till it joins at Shadipur via Ganderbal town. The Sind also enters Anchor lake near Ganderbal. After passing in the Wular lake Jhelum receives water of Modimuti river near village Kalos Bandipur and from various channels of Harbuji, Arrah, Erin-Nullahs in the east of Wular lake. The Wular is the largest fresh water lake in India 10 miles long and 6 miles wide (5280'). The Jhelum river leaves it in the west near Sopur which is a typical delta town formed by siltation. The river becomes



shallow and sand banks appear in the river bed obstructing navigation. It is only in spring (May-July) that rainfall causes the snow to melt at higher elevation in the surrounding mountains and causes floods. The river Jhelum is therefore blessing and a curse too. Below Sopur at Doabagh village it receives the Pohru Nullah which drains the Lolab (Lolav) and Kamail streams, Ramahal and Mawar areas in Handawara and Kupwara Tehsils.

On its left bank it receives the drainage of western mountains like Vishov. It is an important tributary fed by the lake Konsarnag. It joins the river below Sangam Bridge after irrigating Kulgam area which is the granary of Kashmir. Aharabal waterfall lies in this area. The Rambiar is another tributary from the Pir-pass. In its upper course logs of timber are floated down in the stream.

Romushi is another tributary of the Jhelum. It flows from Kharmarg and becomes a river at Pakherpur. The Sukhnag collects drainage from the neighbourhood of Gulmarg and its environs. Dudganga flows from Luder marg in the centre of pir-panchal near Tratakuti. It flows to the south of Srinagar and the Forazpur Nullah in the western mountains of the Baramullah, Gulmarg area with many springs and ice and the Apharwat (14501') Khilanmarg, Ala pather, Gagrimgarg, Banilmarg (19600') and Kantir nag (13,500'). The Sukhnag and Ferozpur streams lose themselves in the large marshes under the banks of Jhelum and Ningle (Sopore) which flows into the Wular Lake. Of these streams the Pohru, Sind and Vishov are navigable for a short distance.

Most of the internal trade in the valley was carried by the river Jhelum and its tributaries. That from ancient times the boats were the principle means of transport and travel is shown by the frequent references to river journeys, boats and boat bridges and ghats are landing places (Yarbal) in the chronicales of Pt. Kalhan. This continued upto the beginning of this century when wheel traffic was introduced and Jhelum valley road was opened. Boat men were engaged whose number was 3400 in 1891.

Dr. Bernier says that there were only two wooden bridges spanning over the Jhelum river (most probably they were Ali-kadal & Zaina-Kadal). Forestor another traveller in 1783 to



Kashmir when it was ruled by Afghan ruler Azad Khan there were five bridges on the Jhelum river. The first bridge on the cantilever principle was built by Sultan Zainulab-ud-Din. There is a mention of boat bridges in existence before Muslim rule in Sharaf-ud-Din Yazdi's Zaffar Nama.

Jhelum is generally silted up between Doabgah (Sopore) and Khadanyar villages below Barmulla. The waters of Pohru Nullah creates obstacles in the flow of water and large areas of cultivable land in Sopore and Sonawari Tehsils remained submerged during the whole Summer season. The state Government has recently employed electrically worked dredgers through which silt and other obstruction from the river bed are removed and danger of floods in upper reaches has been lessened. Much land has now been reclaimed around the Wular Lake. This has been done on the advice given to the State Government by Dr. Uppal, irrigation engineer Govt. of India who visited the area in the early fifties. There is a passage in Sanskrit in Rajtarngni which brings out that when King Kalash who was staying at Vijayeswara (Bijbehara) (1063, A.D) wished to pass his last days at the temple at Mattan, he was carried by the water route in boats along with his ministers to the nearest ghat or landing place (Yarbal) at Khanbal, Anantnag.

Capitals of the country were built on the banks of Jhelum. All produce of the country was brought to great centre by water. Villages had the regular places of landing :—Yarbal on the river of the nearest navigable water way. Most of the capitals and important towns were situated on its banks. One of the main capitals was that of Srinagar. The rulers of Kashmir were eager to have their capitals on the banks.

## CAPITAL

Srinagar, the city royal is an "emerald set in stone" is one of the oldest cities in India and its present name is Srinagar. During the Muslim rule it was called Kashmir or locally Shahari-Kashmir or Kashir and Alberuni notes that the city of Kahmir covers a space of four farsakhs. But when the Sikhs conquered Kashmir in 1819 A.D. they restored the old name Srinagar, which was originally Shrinagari founded by Asoka in the third century B.C. on the banks of Jhelum.

**Old Srinagar**

Kalhana, who lived in the beginning of the twelfth century, mentions in his *Rajtarangni* the city of Srinagar, a city in the south-east of modern Srinagar, most probably situated near the present Pandrethan—he calls it “*puranadhisthan*” (the old capital)—on the banks of Jhelum. It was in the third century B.C. that Ashoka the Maurayan emperor, built this city. It was the capital of Kashmir up to the 6th century A.D. In the neighbourhood of this city his son, Jalauka, built a grand shrine called *Jyestharudra*, which is at present *Zeethyair Tirtha*. But Dr. Stien an eminent indologist, believes it the present *Shankera Acharya Temple*. Kalhana credits Ashoka with the construction of 96,000 dwelling houses, resplendent with prosperity, in this city. While the city was under construction, he also built stupas and Viharas in *Hukhalitr* and *Vithvotr*, villages at present in *Beru* and *Shahabad Doru Tehsils*.

Medeaval historians of Kashmir namely *Haider Malik of Chodur* and *Mohd. Azam Diddamari* mention that the old Srinagar which king Ashoka is said to have built is present *Sir now Sir Kanli Gund*, on *Anantnag (Islamabad) Pahalgam road mile 44* on the left bank of *Lidder stream* in *Khovarpar purgana*. To this tradition refers probably *Prof. George Buhlar*, “Some pandits of the valley also think that it lay near Islamabad”. This theory is not correct now.

The site of the present Srinagar was selected by *Parversena II* who called it *Pervarpur* between (A.D 423-476) or *Parversen-pur* which was shortened to *Pervapur*. *Nagara* means the city and *Shri* is the name of the goddess *Lakhshmi* and may be taken to mean wealth or beauty and sovereignty. *Shri* here does not mean *Surya* or the son and it is a mistake to call Srinagar, the city of sun. The city of Srinagar is between two hills *Hari-par-Vat (Kohimaran)* 500 ft. high and *Takhti-Sulamian (Shankra Achrya hill)* 1000 ft. high. The river *Jhelum* flows through the capital and connects both parts of the city with bridges. Upto 1958 it had seven bridges in all and now there are eleven bridges (eleventh under construction). Srinagar has now an area of 11 miles in length & 6 miles in breadth. It is situated in the centre of the valley of Kashmir and at an elevation of 5,250 ft. The Srinagar valley is enclosed on all sides by mountains and



is shut and does not share in general air circulation of the Punjab and Western Himalyan area. In spite of the elevation, July and August are hot and some what humid. But spring and Autumn are very pleasant. The mean temperature is 35°F in January and 98°F in July. The year 1978 temperature was 38.5°C the highest temperature recorded after 32 years. The annual rain fall exceeds 27".

King Perversen built this city a few miles to the North of the old capital. It extended from Zadibal to present Habba-Kadal, Tenkipur and Zaindar mohalla. The king's palace was located somewhere below Habbakadal on the left bank most probably in the area of Dalhasanyar and Sona-Masjid with its landmarks of Hari Parbat and Shankarachayara hills. The city was dotted with many stone temples dedicated to Shiva, Durga Kali, and Bharrvas. Even at present traces can be found of sculptured blocks, pillars and images. Pt. Kalhan mentions the ghats and its bathing houses (in Kashmiri called Yarbali), a meeting place of friends. Pt. Bilhan, another Kashmiri scholar found the city of Srinagar most charming and surpassing to all other cities for the beauty of its grooves and coolness in summer. Even those who have reached the garden of Celestials could not forget it. Hiuen-Tsang, Chinese scholar and traveller who visited Kashmir in 631 A.D. Calls it the 'new city.' He says "the old city lay to the East. It was on the banks of the Vitasta (Jhelum) and the founder had embellished it with many palaces and temples. The king had got a wooden bridge constructed across the river Vistasta (Jhelum), probably near present Narparistan mohalla, Srinagar." The history of Srinagar is very interesting. It was destroyed and rebuilt several times. The houses were mainly of timber as they are now Pr. Kalhana mentions several places, the splendour of markets and mansions which were so high as to seem to reach the clouds. How it lost its name of Pravarpur and assumed that of the city of Srinagar is difficult to say. Perhaps it was the old name that remained in common use with the people.

The founder of Srinagar seems to have a highly developed sense of town planning. The city was divided into Eight Wards (Units), for the folklore tells us that each was supervised by a ward officer called Bhairav. They are still worshipped today by



the pandits of Srinagar, as the guardian dieties, of different parts of the city. More than one fair is held in their honour each year usually in the month of December or April.

(1) Rainawari and Dal Lake and its neighbourhood are under one ward officer named Vitalaraja Bhairav, in whose honour two fairs are held in Poh (Dec) and the other in Vaiskah (April) both on the sixth day of dark fortnight (Vital Shayum.)

(2) Sathu, Barbarshah, Amira-Kadal, and Ganpatyar are under the control of Anand Ishwar Bhairav whose temple stands at Maisum near Badshah Chowk. The annual fair in his honour is held on the tenth day of the dark fortnight of December.

(3) The left bank of river Jhelum Habakadal, Tankipora, Dalhasanyar, and Doodganga formed another ward. The temple of its guardian diety is Tushkaraja Bhairav. The temple is situated on the right bank of Doodganga in Karan-Nagar locality. Devotees congregate here with their offerings at the time of annual fair which is usually held on the sixth day of the dark night of the month of Vaisakh (April).

(4) At the confluence of the Doodganga and Jhelum at Chambal there is another temple marking the spot which is sacred Bhakhtishwar Bhairav, who controls Safa-kadal, Chambal and Dadimar (Khanqahi Soktha) localities.

(5) On the right bank of river Jhelum the areas comprising Ali-Kadal, Hari-Parbat and Maharajganj were under the control of Purnaraja Bhairav, whose shrine lies somewhere near Vantapur in a vegetable garden.

(6) The areas of Fateh Kadal and Zaina-Kadal on the right side of the river and whole of Bhoori-Kadal Mohallas constituted the ward under Mangalaraja Bhairav, whose shrine lies on an island opposite M.P. Higher Secondary School, Srinagar and is marked by shady Mullberry tree.

(7) On the left bank of river Jhelum the localities of Gorgari Mohalla, Nawa-Bazar and Jamallatta were presided over by Jayksen Bhairav.

(8) The land beyond Noorbagh, Sekidafar and Waniyar and the lands beyond are under the charge of Vishksen Bhairav.

Pandits of Srinagar offer their prayers generally on

Tuesdays and Saturdays and distribute husked rice (Tahar) mixed with parts of sheep's liver and is distributed among those who are present at the congregation.

Srinagar is the terminal of one of the centres of Asia trade route, while its chief locality these days is Mayasum (Maisuma) which was an island formed by the Tsunti-Khul canal and Jhelum and acremation ground for the city people. During Mughal and Phathan rule it was densely planted by mullberry trees and was hence called "Maidani Maisuma" and now are the head quarters of civil lines, hotels, club, Head post office and head telegraph offices, banks, tourisim, Government Arts Emporium etc. It is now the centre of Srinagar-State Chief ministers also reside here.

Here a decisive battle was fought in Oct-Nov 1846, between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the Sikh army. Both the armies had assembled near the present pologround. The Maharaja fired an artillery cannon from the hillock of present Ramji's temple, Burbarshah. The Sikh army retreated to the Srinagar fort (Hari Parbat) and thus Maharaja won the day. In honour of Rama, the Khisrtrya god, he built the temple at the site which is Ramji's temple in 1847-48. His commander-in-chief Wazir Lakhpai Rai was killed in the battle whose Samadhi stands opposite to the Catholic Church Srinagar.

#### **Vijbror (Bijbehara) :**

Bijbihara or Vijabrur, abbreviated from Vijayeshwara (Siva's temple) is said to have been founded by king Vijaya (69-61 B.C.). The tradition regarding Ashoka's connection with it supplies historical proof for its antiquity. Vijbror is wrongly pronounced as Bijbehara. Ashoka, when he was governor of Gandhara province, followed the cult of Shavism and built two temples here and named these as Ashokaeswara. He built a massive stone wall around these temples after dismantling the old stucoo enclosures and credited these with having propitiated by a fast, Lord Bhuteshwara at this famous shrine. This is fully inkeeping with what from other evidence, we conclude as to Ashoka's attitude towards other religious systems that he figures in Kashmir record also as the benefactor of the ancient and famous shrine of Vijayeshwara, and worshipper at the Siva shrine at Bhutesha. These two shrines were situated on the

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right side of the Jhelum river, at a place known as Soma or Somthung. Tradition has it that the temple had a statue of a cow hanging in the dome of the temple. Mihirakul, the Hun King, brought one thousand Brahmans from Gandhara and settled them here. During the 11th century several decisive battles were fought between Sussal and Anantdev the city was burnt down along with Vijayeshwar temple. In 1861 A.D. Maharaja Ranbir Singh removed the debris of the Vijayashnar temple and built a new temple just near the present bridge.

Dara Sukuh built a bridge over Jhelum in 1631 A.D. It is now in ruins. The Badshahi Bagh is remembered on account of the slab which bears the following inscription: "By the grace of God, Dara Shukuh on the 22nd day of Ramzan in the year of the Hijra 1060, in the reign of Shah Jahan Badshah Ghazi, completed this building which was erected under the Superintendence of Darugha Muhammad Zahid Abul Hassan Samarqandi." The site of the Badshahi Bagh lies on the right bank of the river to the south of the present bridge. The shrine of the saint and scholar Abul Fuqura Baba Nasib-ud-Din Ghazi is situated on the left bank of the river near the Jamia Masjid. His grave stands to this day as a ziyarat. He was a disciple of Baba Daud Khaki. Ghazi was born in 977 A.H. 1569 A.D. and died in 1047 A.H. 1637 A.D. at Bijbihara. Scholars are indebted to him for publishing for the first time, the account of the life of Shaikhu Aalam Shaikh Nur-ud-Din Rishi under the title of 'Nur-nama' in persian. Hitherto Nur-ud-Din's life was in Sanskrit in Sharada script.

**Avantipur:** It was built in the ninth century A.D. on Jhelum, by an illustrious ruler in the person of Avantiverman. He built the city of Avantipur present "Wontipur" on a high and dry spur, of the Wastarwan hills. Owing to its central and strategic location in the Valley, the town has been of considerable importance since the date of its foundation and hence is often mentioned in the Samayamatrika of Kshemendra and in the Chronicles of Kalhana, Jonaraj and Srivara. The large number of ruins extending up to the hills to the east of the present Avantipura town shows that in former times it used to cover a large area. It was a flourishing city up to 12th century A.D. when it was destroyed and burnt down by Damars (feudal Hindu tribe).



**Narapur city:** Kalhana mentions the existence of a grand and important city called Narapur on the bank of river Jhelum on the left side near the present Bijbehara. His description is elaborate. He says the markets of the city were kept full of supplies by the high roads leading to it. Big boats used to ply on up and down giving splendour to the river. Its gardens were full of flowers and fruits. Local tradition mentions the shrine of Chakradhara Vishnu in the town of Narapur on the Karewa of Sumthan village, near Sangam. Pilgrims from far-off places would offer their prayers. The city was founded in about 90 B.C. by king Nara. The city was burnt down along with the shrine of Vishnu by King Bhaskikara while fighting Sussal. Another name of this city was Kimnarpora. It was encircled by walls. There is no trace left of this grand city now except a few hamlets on Srinagar-Anantnag Highway.

**Pampore :** The city was founded in the first quarter of the ninth century by king Padma, maternal uncle of Jayapida. Because of its central position in the valley the city grew in importance and is frequently mentioned in Rajtarangini. Here is a temple dedicated to Vishnu and which was destroyed by the rulers of Shaivite creed and Damarars and its wealth was taken away. Here is Jamia Masjid and the Ziarat of Shoga Baba Sahib.

**Parihaspur:** In the middle of 8th century the great king of Kashmir Lalitaditya founded the city of Parihaspur or paraspur as it is now called by the locals and is situated 2½ miles south west of Shadipur and is in between the villages of Panznoir and Hāratrath and stretching from there on a Karewa (plateau) of Ichman Dever, on the banks of Jhelum. Unfortunately the city of paraspur had remained unidentified till 1892 A.D. when the ruins of this city were found for the first time by Dr. Stein. The city was already known to our earlier chroniclers like Haider Malik of Chodra, Mohamad Azam of Diddamari, Birbal Kachru and Narayan Koul. It was built in the centre of the valley so that view could be obtained from the Indus Valley to Harmukh and Mahadev. No city was ever set in more lovely surrounding than paraspur. Lalitaditya built this city out of the vast treasures which he had brought from the subdued regions. Lalitaditya, erected five large buildings in this city.



1. The temple of parihasa Keshaya with a silver image.
2. The temple of Mukta-Keshva with golden image.
3. The temple of Mahaveraha with an image clad in golden armour.
4. The temple of Goverdhanadhara with a silver image.
5. The Rajvihara Buddhist monastery with a large quadrangle and a colossal statue of Buddha in copper. This indicates that there must have been large settlements of Buddhists. He erected stone pillar 54 cubits high with an image of Garuda on the top.

The city throws light on the religious conditions of Kashmir. The Chinese pilgrim Cukong who visited—parihaspur in 759 A.D. only a few years after Lalitaditya's death says that Buddhist cult was in flourishing condition and there existed numerous viharas and stupas. He says Buddha's image was brought from Maghadha by his Prime Minister and for a pretty long time was existing even at the time Kalhana is 1148 A.D. A great religious festival was celebrated in the month of March every year to commemorate the victories of Lalitaditya. But as ill luck would have it, two centuries later copper statue of Buddha and other silver images were removed and melted down by king Harsha and in the rising which led to the downfall of king Harsha 1089 A.D. Parihaspur was occupied and burnt by the pretender to the throne of Uccala. The steep slopes of the plateau and marshes around it made it a position of military value. When Uccala had suffered a defeat, some of routed rebels threw themselves in Raj Vihara monastery which was subsequently burnt and raised to the ground. Thereafter Parihaspur ceased to be the royal residence and Lalitaditya's son Vijraditya, removed its foundation. King Avantiverman diminished its importance further. His irrigation Minister Suyya Berman effected the regulation of river Jhelum and diverted its junction 3 miles away near Shadipur. A century and a half later Avantiverman's son Shanker Verman carried away the structural material from Parihaspur and used the same material for the construction of his new city and temples at Shankerpattan, (Modern pattan)

on Srinagar-Baramulla highway) Even during the last decades of 19th century it was robbed of its valuable construction material by Maharaja Pratap Singh's government for the metalling of Jhelum valley road which was later on put to stop by Mr. Talbot, the then British Resident in Srinagar.

The city of Parihaspur is the birth place of our great master poet historian Kalhana Pandit, the author of Rajtarangini son of a great Kashmirian Minister the illustrious lord Canpaka during the reign of ill-fated king Harshadev.

**City of Jayapur:** There existed one more city of importance on the banks of Jhelum known as Jayapur (present Anderkot village), built by Lalitaditya's grand son Jayapida at the close of 8th century which is identified with its present village of Anderkot in Tehsil Sonawari near Sumbal village. It was a flourishing city and was built on an island rising from the Subal Lake. The fort of Anderkot was surrendered by Kota Rani the last Hindu queen of Kashmir to Shah Mir, her minister. There is no trace left of this grand city except a few hamlets. Jayapida built temples and viharas in this city and his queen Kamla Devi built grand Matha in this city. In its neighbourhood lies the great Sultan of Kashmir Sultan Shamus-ud-Din buried, which is in a bad state of preservation.

**Sopur:** It is an important delta town created by the siltation of Wolur-lake. It was founded during the reign of Avanti-Verman by his irrigation Engineer Minister, Suyya-Verman in the second half of 9th century, named it as Suyyapur on the banks of Jhelum where the river leaves water from the wolar lake. Sultan Zainul-Abddin constructed a bridge across Jhelum in 1462 (A.D.). For a long time it has remained the capital city of Kamraz (ancient Kramrajya). Suyyapura (Sopur) became a centre of trade in the North of the Valley. It is a flourishing town next to Srinagar at present. For the last few centuries it was often raided along with the other towns of the valley by the Gojjar Tribes of the Jhelum Valley known as "Khokas". Even mothers frighten their crying children by saying that Khokas have come. Their last raid on the valley was in 1856 A.D. in the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh who brought these turbulent tribes under control and repaired the fort at Sopore already

built by earlier pathan rulers. Here Jamia Masjid was built-by-Aurangzeb Aalamgir.

**Havishkpur (Ushkar Village):** Close to Baramulla on the Srinagar Highway there existed one more city called Havishkpur which is a mere village at present two miles in the east of Baramulla. It retained its importance for a long time as the headquarters of Buddhist monks and also as the first town of note in the valley at its entrance from the Jhelum Valley Road. Alberuni gives its exact location. Lalitaditya built an image of Mukta Swamin. The remains of the ancient vihara and stupa can be seen near the village at present. He also built a grand Buddhist monastery and vihara which served as the resting place for the Chinese travellers and scholars, Ou Kong and Hiuen Tsang. Here, in A.D. 631 the king of Kashmir Durlabhavardhan (625-661) A.D. received with great pomp and show the Chinese traveller and scholar Hiuen Tsang who came here for a study of Sutras and Sastras. The king escorted him from the capital Hushkpur (ushkur) to Srinagar as Jaya Vindra Vihara, which has been located near the present Jamia Masjid Srinagar.

**Jushkpur (Zukar) :** it is present days' Zukar 10 kilometers from Srinagar in the North near (Kashmir University Campus) It was founded by Tartar ruler, Jushka. It must have been a centre of trade and learning. In its vicinity a grand vihara, named Amrit Bhawan, was built, a mohalla extant known as Wonta Bhawan.

**Damodhara City:** For many years after Ashoka's death Kashmir was ruled by a prince named Damodhara, whose descent is not clear. He is believed to have founded his capital city on the present airport plateau called Yachhigam pargana. In order to raise water for drinking and cultivation for his city, he erected a dam called "Gud Sathu," which is an extant village. "When" deplores Kalhana," a high minded man wished to execute some beneficial work of an extraordinary character, there rise alas : obstacles from the deficiency of men's spiritual merits from former births. One day Damodhara was going to the river to perform his customary ablutions in the Vitasta (Jhelum) when he was importuned for food by some hungry Brahmins; he deferred complying with their solicitations till he had bathed in the river at some distance;



to shorten the interval they proposed to bring the river to him; immediately the water of the Vitasta (Jhelum) bubbled up from different places near them, forming the springs that are still to be seen. The king was unmoved by this miracle and still determined to bathe in the genuine stream; the Brahmins pronounced a curse upon him and transformed him into a snake; in that shape he haunts the grounds near the capital and is often to be seen in the dark solitude of the plateau.

## LAKES OF THE VALLEY

The Vale of Kashmir is a land of lovely and fresh water lakes, mountain tarns and swampy lagoons. The lakes are fed by the springs and melting snow the tarns are formed by the glacial action. The lakes and lakelets found in the upper valley around Harmukh (Harmukhta) are : Gangabal, Lool Gool and Sarbal in the sindh valley. They are at the elevation of nearly 12,000 feet above sea level. The Gangabal lake with its shimmering water is held sacred by the pandits of the valley. To the south of Pir Panjal range lies the lake of Konsar Nag in the deep green mountain, at an elevation of 12,800 feet. It is fed by glaciers. It is said to be a source of the Jhelum. Of this lake Dr. Duke says :

“Allowing the peaks on either side to be 15,000 feet, this would give the lake a level of 12,500 to 13,000 feet. In the spring and summer the water is some 40 ft. higher than in winter. In the spring [its surface is said to be covered with icebergs which are driven about by the wind.”

Konsar Nag is one of largest lakes in Kashmir. The tarn is over two miles long and is often frozen till early June. The waters of Konsar Nag tarn make a wild entrance into the valley over the splendid Aharbal fall while the rolling grass mountain called Tosmaidan—the springy downs of Raiyar looking over the Sukh Nag river as it themes forking down the mountains—the long winding meadow of Yusmarg and little hills of Nil Nag with its pretty lake screened by the dense

forests. Nil Nag is the source of the Doodh-Ganga river.

In the Liddar valley large glaciers are observed. On the mountain range of this valley the glaciers are found in Kolahoi. According to Dr. Neve, one glacier is about five miles in length and comes down as low as 11,000 feet. From here to the east on the way to Amar Nath cave lies the famous Shesh Nag at an elevation of 12,500 feet. Pilgrims going for a darshan of the Shivi Lingam in the cave must take a dip in the ice cold waters of Shesh Nag which is fed by the glaciers surrounding it. Other mountain tarns scattered all over the Lidar and Sindh valleys include Khemsar, Tarsar, Marsar. Har Nag and Narian Nag.

Coming into the valley proper we find the frozen lake of Alapathar or Agharwat, over Khilanmarg. The mountain tarn stands at the height of about 12,500 feet. It is said to be 500 yards long and 150 yards wide. The surroundings are austere and wild. It is a popular resort of tourists.

The most famous lakes in the valley are the Wular, the Dal and the Manasbal lakes. The Manasbal lake does not possess the same importance in Kashmir as the Wular and Dal lakes which are rich in natural products. The charm of Manasbal consists in its deep clear water and its pink lilies but it has behind it grand mountain which forms an effective contrast to the gentle beauty of the lake. The waters of Manasbal flow out through a canal to the Jhelum river. Some thirty years ago Srinagar people used to visit the lake in Doongas and enjoy its beauty. It has some hot springs which never freeze even in the coldest winters.

## WULAR LAKE

The Wular is the largest fresh water lake in Asia. In normal years the Wular is thirteen miles long and about six miles broad. Its boundary is ill-defined in some directions. The depth of the western and the north-western part which is away from the marshes is about 14 feet. The depth is less, continuously lessening where the streams debouch into it. Formation of land even is going on.

For about half the way round the Wular, mountains bound it. These are spurs of heights varying from a few hundred feet

to 5,000 feet above the lake level ; connected with ranges from which a few peaks rise to the snowline. Along the northern shore of the lake, in front of mountains is an edging of sloping ground covered with villages. This cultivated land is partly on the slope and partly on the half flat [that has been recovered from the lake.

The Bohnar, Madumati and the Erin streams flows into the Wular, while from the south river Jhelum seeks a passage through it to Baramulla. The lands around the lake are never safe when the floods come down and 24 hours of rain over the valley with melting snow will spread the lake over many miles. During floods the Wular menacingly covers an area of more than 105 sq. miles.

The natives say that the Pohru stream when in flood is the cause of the inundation effected by the Wular and the Jhelum river, as the Pohru river also forms a bar checking the overflow waters of the lake. In the north-eastern corner of the Wular is an artificial island, Zaina Lank, constructed by the 15th century great Kashmiri King Zain-ul-Abidin, popularly called Budshah. The ruins on the island show that it must have been a place of great beauty. It is said that the King built the island at the deepest point in the lake as a storm-refuge for the boars. Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin had built his palace and a mosque in this island, where he would spend his Ramzan month in worship here, and would exercise a strict watch over the movements of Gujjar tribes called Khokhs of Karnah valley. The Wular has bad reputation among the boatmen of Kashmir. When the winds come down the mountains gorges of Erin and Bandipora, and the gale blows from the Shukr-ud-Din hill over the deep water, the quiet surface of the lake changes into a sea of rolling waves most dangerous to the flat-bottomed craft of the country. It is said that where the blue waters of the Wular now rest, there was once a great and wicked city (Sandimat Nagar) which was swallowed up in an earth quake and the floods completed its destruction. The meaning of the word Wular is cave and legends say that the remains of the wicked city have been seen by boatmen when the water are shallow. Dr. Buhler states that the Sanskrit name is Ullola (The lake) with high going waves.



## DAL LAKE

The Dal lake is called as Dala by Shrivara. The Dal lake lies at the foot of the hills to the east of Srinagar city. It is 4 miles long and nearly 2 miles broad. Against the mountain background which is reflected in its calm expanse and enclosed by trees, the lake looks magnificent. According to Hassan the Dal lake was a great meadow known as Vitlani Marg. Parvar-sen II while constructing his new city Parvarpur (modern city of Srinagar) in the 6th century AD. effected an embankment at Nawpora by sinking huge boats full of boulders to protect the meadow and during the reign of Durlaba Verdhana 625 AD. flood waters of Jhelum was admitted in the meadow and thus it was converted into a big lake. The Dal has several distinct parts namely Bud Dal, (the bigger Dal), Lokut Dal (smaller Dal) Sodar Khun Dal (now Nagin Dal) and Dal Kotwal in the east of Aish Bagh bridge and Gagribal lake whose water is pure and calm. Sodar Khun Dal is deepest portion of lake. The demarcation line is a narrow path covered on both sides by willow trees. This path connects Rainawari with Nishat Bagh and has some bridges also, below which the these parts of the Dal have the connections. Like the artificial island Zaina Lank of the Wular two parts of the Dal have an island each, Sona Lank and Rupa Lank with restaurants on them. Nehru Park is another artificial island near Gagribal point at the foot of the Shankracharya hill.

Sona Lank or the "gold Isle" was built in the reign of Sultan Zainul-ab-ud-Din in front of the Hazratbal shrine in the Bud Dal with three stores palace. It fell down due to earthquake and later on it was repaired and rebuilt by the Afghan Governor Mir Khan Jawan Shir in 1773 AD. with decorations by chinars and fountains in its compound. Similarly Zainul-ab-ud-Din's great grand son Sultan Hassan Shah (1487 AD.) built the Rupa Lank (Silver Isle) in the Lokut Dal known as Asthwol. During the Sikh rule no repairs were done to it. The Dal water met the Jhelum river near Habba Kadal through present day Shelitengh locality up to Sultan Zainul-ab-ud-Din's reign. After the completion of Mar canal the Sultan diverted Dal water through it, and closed the Habba Kadal confluence for irrigation of lands of the lower reaches in the city during

the summer months. The Dal water would flow during winter months through Tsunti Khul Canal which met at the confluence at Dubji Ghat Gow Kadal.

The Anchar Dal previously a part of the Dal lake and now a vast swamp once covered an area of about 8 sq. miles. Nigin lake (Sadur Khun) which is on the outskirts of the Srinagar city, about 6 miles away. A lovely garden of chinar trees borders the lake. Bathing, boating, water skiing and other aquatic sports are available on the Nigin lake.

The Dal receives its supply from the springs and streams. It is shallow in parts and inclining to be marshy ; in other parts it is deeper and everywhere it is of the clearest water. A great bank separates the low land that edges it from certain sides channels of the river, but there is a passage left for the sake of navigation, and a door that opens to the river Jhelum.

The Dal changes its level but little. There is usually a flow of its waters out through the passage. When the river is very low a temporary dam that stops the passing of any boat that cannot be dragged over it, is made to prevent the lake being too much drained. When the river rises with a flood, the gate shuts off itself and secures the lake distinct from inundation. The regulation of the outfall of water and the maintenance at all times of navigation is controlled by the sluice gates.

A mountainous amphitheatre backs the Dal lake on three sides rising from 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the water level. On the ground at the foot of these mountains at the edge of the lake are numerous villages surrounded by orchards and several renowned gardens constructed by the Mughal Emperors. Westwards, towards the open flat are, first the gardens that float then the half reclined marsh alternate strips of shallow water and made ground and then the city.

The Dal is perhaps one of the most beautiful spots in the world. The mountain ridges which are reflected in its waters as in a mirror are grand and varied and the trees and vegetation on the shores of the Dal being of exquisite beauty. It is difficult to say when the Dal is most beautiful. In spring the fresh green tints of the trees and the mountain sides are refreshing to the eye, but it is perhaps in October that the colours of the lake are most charming. The willow change

from green to silver-grey and delicate russet, with a red tone on the stems and branches casting colours on the clear water of the lake which contrast most beautifully with the rich olives and yellow greens of the floating masses of water weed. The chinars are warm with crimson and the poplars stand up like golden poles to the sky. On the mountain sides, the trees are red and golden and the scene is one of unequalled loveliness. If one looks at the mountains the shapes and shadows are wonderful in their boldness. Citywards from the lake stands the famous Shankracharya hill to the left and to the right the hill of Hari Parbat, with its picturesque fort full of recollections of the grandeur of the past times. Between these hills lies Srinagar city, and away to west are snow-capped mountains of the Vale.

The water of the Dal is clear and soft as silk and the people say that the shawls of Kashmir owe much of their excellence to being washed in the soft waters of the lake before 1947 A.D. Nature has done much for the Dal, but the Mughal Emperors have in their time nobly exerted themselves to enhance the natural beauties of the lake, and the terraced gardens of Jehangir and Shah Jehan, with the prim rows of sypresses through which formal cascades tumble down to the edge of the Dal are pleasing to a tourist from any corner of the world. The majestic chinar trees have added a distinctive charm to the lovely Dal Lake—the lake ‘par excellence’ of Kashmir.

The park of chinar trees known as the Naseem Bagh, the ‘garden of breezes’, which was planted in Emperor Shah-Jehan’s time is the most beautiful of all the pleasure places of the royal gardeners view of old times but wherever one looks, the Dal has some new of beauty. Nothing is perhaps more striking than the ruined Pari Mahal, standing grandly on the spur of the Zabrawn mountain—a memorial of the Mughal love of letters. The Pari Mahal or the fairies palace was built by the Mughal Prince Dara Shikoh for his tutor Pir Mullah Akhun Shah who is buried at Mali Shahi Bagh near the Kashmir University Campus.

## MANASBAL LAKE

A mile away from the right bank of river Jhelum under



the foot of the mountain spurts, at the end of the Sindh Valley is a small lake, the Manasbal, covering an area of 1.28 sq. miles. This lake which is deepest of all other lakes is situated with a low hill, Aha-tang on one side and an elevated plateau on the other. Its greenish-blue waters superbly reflects the hill which surround it. The lake is very pretty and owing to its depth has always a considerable expanse of clear water. Closeby in an old saint's garden renowned for its peaches and grapes. Embedded in the soil and at the edge of the lake is a small temple of which the roof only is visible. It is an ancient temple.

On the northern bank of the lake is an extended terraced garden faced with masonry, called the Darogha Bagh, another magnificent relic of the garden-making epoch of the Mughal Emperor Jehangir. The charm of Manasbal chiefly consists in its deep clear water and its pink lilies. The waters of Manasbal flow out through a canal to the river Jhelum. The lake has some hot springs which never freeze even in the coldest winters.

## HOKAR SAR

Hokar Sar, a vast swamp about 15 kilometers away from Srinagar on the road to Baramulla near Hanjik Karewa is the best resting place for the migratory ducks and other birds coming to Kashmir in the winter months, from Siberia and Central Asia. The swamp is only useful as a game garden. Its water is clean.

Next to the saffron cultivation in interest come the floating gardens of the lakes in Kashmir which resemble the 'chinampas of old Mexico. The whole cultivation and vegetation of the lakes is of the great importance to the vast majority of people in Kashmir.

## KHOSHAL SAR

This lake is one of the most beautiful lakes situated in the northern part of Srinagar two miles in length and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in width. It extends from Zadibal to Idgah Srinagar. Its "pechh" (*Typhaaugustata*) grown abundantly in this lake, is divided between the managing committees of Jamia Masjid

and Khanqah of Hassanabad. Its water is clean and calm. A little fish of Mirror Corb kind is found in the lake. Old and ruined Khanqahi Nur Baksh is situated on its banks. Imman Bara is close by.

## PRODUCTS

The "radh" or the floating gardens are made of long strips of the lake reed. These strips can be towed from place to place and are moored at the four corners by the poles driven into the lake bed. When the radh is sufficiently strong to bear the weight of man, heaps of weed and mud are extracted from the lake by poles and these heaps are formed into cones and placed at intervals on the radh. The cones are known as Pokhar and each cone accommodates two seedling of melons or cucumbers. Everything that plant life requires is present. A rich soil and ample moisture, with the summer sun of Kashmir, help to produce vegetables in surprising abundance and of excellent quality. It is not an uncommon thing to gather thirty full sized fruits from every plant, or from ninety to one hundred fruits from each receptacle.

Not behind the floating gardens in fertility are the demb lands which are formed along the sides of the lake when the water is shallow. The cultivator selects his site and plants willows and sometimes poplars along its four sides. Inside these willows he casts boat-loads of weed and mud until his land is above the flood level and year by year he adds a new dressing of the rich lake weed and mud. Around the demb lands run little water channels from the lake so that moisture is always present. On these demb plots a variety of crops is raised. Rape-seed, Maize, tobacco melons and other cucurbitaceae, potatoes, onions, radish, turnips, egg-plants, white beans, peaches, apricots, quinces flourish on the rich soil.

Apart from the splendid produce of the 'radh' and demb lands the cultivators of these lakes have other sources of food which the lakes yield them free of labour. Besides abundant fish, the singare nuts afford an easy meal which is not to be despised. The jewar (*Euryale ferox*) now extinct, gave a pleasant seed which was eaten raw or parched. The bumbh, with its long stem and white flower, provides a nonrishing

vegetable from the former and an agreeable sharbat from the later.

Then the glory of the lake, the pink lily, the Lotus, yielding a sweet nut and a warm, savoury vegetable in its leaf-stem, the 'Nadru' white and succulent. Lastly is the "Pechh" (typha Laugustata) the rush from which the matting of Kashmir is made.

### **Solution for improvement**

Many of India's important lakes and rivers are getting polluted with serious economic and ecological consequences. The Dal and Nigin lakes which attract thousands of tourists every year are getting choked with water weeds and are becoming increasingly unsuitable for heating swimming and fishing. The weeds grow on nutrients dumped into the lakes as wastes. Alarmed at this growing pollution, the national committee on environmental planning and coordination had sanctioned Rs. 4 lakhs to Kashmir University to make a study of the Dal lake and its surrounding areas in Srinagar.

The Wular is also facing danger due to silting and shrinking. This picturesque lake which acts as a huge drainage reservoir in years of flood, is shrinking gradually to inactivity due mainly to the Hydrolic department of the State. There are many number of illegal encroachments on its vast expanse which by impeding the flow of water through natural channels add to siltation problem. At the same time deforestation and cultivation of the mountain slopes have led to soil erosion. The silt which is carried through the Jhelum and its numerous tributaries settles down on the bed of the lake. If this goes on the lake will be reduced to a narrow water channel in about a hundred years, according to an expert opinion.

An indication of this gradual change can be observed from the present position. Zaina Lank which was once situated in the middle of the lake, in its deep portion has now an area round it a shallow marsh.

Experts believe that the life of the lake can be lengthened if effective and speedy measures are adopted for afforestation and soil conservation in the upper reaches of the valley. Some time ago a Rs. 1.80 crore centrally sponsored soil



conservation scheme was prepared for the treatment of 1.20 lakh acres of land in the catchment area of the Pohru stream which annually deposits 3 million cubic feet of silt and rock-debris in the Jhelum at Doabgah village (Sopur). The scheme was obviously meant to prevent the choking of the Jhelum beyond the lake, increase its discharge capacity and thus reduce the general rise in the river bed and the lake. Much, however depends on what steps are taken to prevent soil erosion in other areas through which the Jhelum and its tributaries pass before entering Wular lake.

The Dal lake is also silting and shrinking. There can be no doubt that as years pass by the deposit of the Telbal and Arrah streams as observed during the last forty years which feeds the Dal must result in the lake becoming even more shallow than we see at present. Besides Dal gate (Drugjan) the Dal has one more outlet in the north west through Nullah Amir Khan which is uncontrolled.

Great vigilance is required to be exercised on the floating gardens (Radh) multiplying it an alarming rate will cover all the lake area in the days to come.

Recently scheme for the improvement of the Dal lake has been launched and the amount Rs. 200 crores has been earmarked for improvement and beautification of the lake. Two types of fast growing weed-Typha of augustata and Phragmites communis locally called as 'Pechh' and 'Nar Ghassa' can be removed as they consume most of the minerals present in the lake and grow above the water level, thus interfering with the beauty of the lake. In addition twelve localities have recently grown up in the midst of the lake, which have marred the beauty of the lake such illegal encroachments and constructions are required to be removed to save the lake from becoming a piece of swamp, and if the scheme is not implemented, the Dal will lose its present shape and will erase from the map of Srinagar.

## **FESTIVALS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE VALLEY**

There are many Hindu and Muslim Holy days in Kashmir, the chief of these are as under :

### Sont

Kashmiri Pandits hold customary ceremonies on many religious festivals. They proceed according to lunar months. The holy days and festivals are calculated by the lunar months where-as worldly affairs of them or regulated by solar months. The first day of solar Chetr is the supreme and is celebrated as Sont of Spring festival on the 15th of March every year. A basket of unhusked rice, with bread, a rupee, a pen-case, a cup of curd a few walnuts cooked rice some flowers especially of Bred Mushik (*Salix Caprea*) and Vai (*Acorus Calmus*) are kept over-night and seen the first thing in the morning on waking up by the inmates of the house. Each picks one or two walnuts which are dropped in the river after bathing. The unhusked rice is given to fisherman who make present of fish which is eaten in the evening of the Sont day. The fair is generally held in some open ground of the village or city where the youngsters play games and women enjoy and go in flocks to Badamwari (Almond Garden) and pay homage to the sweet lilacs. Lawrence remarks : "It is not mere love of beauty of colour that imples them, but a spirit of thanksgiving that the winter with its miseries of cold and its dreary monotony of white snow has passed, and that the earth has come to life again with all her bright flowers and promise of kindly fruits" The following saying in Kashmiri gives us a fair idea of how the Kashmiri looked forward to the spring.

Wandae chali shin galli bayiye bahar.

If winter comes, can spring be far-behind.

The people of the city celebrate the Sont festival (Badamwari festival) collectively without any consideration of class and creed. Out in the almond gardens, one generally finds Hindus and Muslims sitting side by side, drinking tea from their streaming samawars. On this occasion the songs of spring are also sung. Blossoms of almonds and the warm sunshine on the mountain slopes of Hari parbat and Shankaracharya hills are enjoyed to the full. In the past this was declared a public holiday which is now scrapped.

**Hairat (Shivratri)**

The most important festival is the Shivratri. It commences from the first day of dark fortnight of Phagan (Feb. March). From the 5th to the 9th day house cleaning and washing of the clothes is done. On the 10th day money according to the customary scale is sent to the daughters. On the 11th fried fish and bread are cooked in the house and after a brief ceremony the whole family partake of the food. On the 13th day the head of the family keeps a fast and performs the puja of Shiva during the night. The 14th day is the feast day. The elders are given presents of sugar or fruit by the younger ones; and cooked rice and meat are sent to the daughters. On the 15th day or first day of the succeeding fortnight, walnuts consecrated at the puja are distributed among relations and friends.

Presents to daughters include Salt, Kangar (fire pot) Wooden sandle (Khrav).

**Pun**

Pun is a ceremony held in honour of the Goddess Lakshmi. Bread is prepared in each household on any auspicious day during the bright fortnight of Bhadon and, after performing the necessary religious rites, is distributed among relatives and neighbours.

**Kambari pach**

Kambari pach or the dark fortnight of Assuj (Sept-Oct) is entirely devoted to the shradha ceremonies. A shradha is performed in memory of the departed pitris on the days corresponding to the tithi of the day of his or her death. Priests are given phal-mul (fruits) in kind and cash.

**Jeth Ashtami**

Jeth Ashtami or the 8th day of the bright fortnight of Jeth Zaith Aithem (May-June) is sacred on account of the birthday of the Goddess Ragnia. On this day a fair is held at the sacred spring situated at the village of Tulumulla. Thousands of people flock hither and spend the night praying and singing around the spring. Pandits of the Valley keep fast



on this day and prepare Kheer (rice in liquid form mixed with sugar and milk).

### **Har Nawmi**

Har Nawmi or the 9th day of the bright fortnight of Har (June-July) is the birthday of the Goddess Sharika whose shrine is situated on the Hari Parvat (Kohimaran) hill in Srinagar. From early morning people in their thousands go round the sacred hill and also attend a big havan performed in honour of the Goddess there.

### **Naw Warih**

Naw warih or the New Year's day falls on the first day of the bright fortnight of chet (March-April) and the custom of unhusked rice, etc. being seen in the morning as on Sont is observed. The sons-in-law are invited and given a feast, and on return to their homes are given money presents. A big fair is held in every village or a town where Kashmir Pandits are living in good numbers. New clothes are generally worn on this day.

### **Baisakhi**

Baisakhi festival was introduced by the sikhs in the valley. Kashmiri pandits also celebrate this festival at Gupt Ganga Spring at Ishabar where a fair is held and people generally take a purificatory bath and then visit the nearby Nishat Bagh for a picnic. It is from that day that officially fountains and cascades begin to play in various old Moghul gardens for the ensuing season.

### **Ursi Reshipir**

It is celebrated on the fifth day of the full moon in Baisakh. A fair is held in honour of Reshipir, a Hindu saint at Ali-Kadal. Reshipir lived in the first half of 17th century in Srinagar. ¶He is known among Kashmiris as Pir-Pandit-Padshah. Reshipir's funeral rites are performed and every Hindu presents—to the saints representative and receives some fried rice which is taken home and distributed among relations

**Shrawan Dvadash/Sharawan Bah**

It is held on the 12th day of the waxing moon of the month Sawan (July). On this day the rites are performed for children who die before they receive the sacred thread (Yognupaveet). On this day the bereaved parents flock to the spring called Kapalmochan at Batpur near Shopian to intercede for their lost ones. Shrad is performed and garments of the deceased are distributed.

**Shravan-ponim/Rakshabandhan**

It is held on the full moon day of Sawan (August). Pilgrims must reach the distant cave of Amar Nath, Thajiwar. (Lidder valley), Danishwar (near Bandipur). Sari-shwer, Harishwer and Mahadev (near Srinagar). On this day Lord Shiva is worshiped. Sweets are distributed and donations are offered at these shrines.

**Khichi-mawas/Khichiri-amawasi**

According to Neelamatpurana, the valley of Kashmir was once a vast mountain lake and was drained by Kashyap Reshi who imported residents and sages from India to live here. In those pre-historic days, it is said that tribes called Pishachas and Yakshas were living here. They used to give trouble to these immigrants and as advised by Nila, the Lord of Nagas, the residents (immigrants) off and on offered food and clothing to these tribes who then allowed them a peaceful time. The festival of Khichimawas is still observed by Kashmir Pandits on the 15th day of the dark fortnight of Poh (December-January) when Kichri is cooked in every house and kept outside in the compound in new earthen plates or in a jar made of fresh grass—as present to the Pishachas and Yakhas.

**Zang Trai**

Zang-trai is held on the third day of Naw warih or the New Years day. On this day married ladies visit their parents as per custom and receive presents from them and in the same evening return to their homes.

**Janam Ashtami**

Janam Ashtami is the birthday of Lord Krishna which is

celebrated on the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Bhadon (August-September) when every Kashmiri Pandit keeps a fast which is broken at moonrise. Presents of various fruits and cash are sent to daughters on this day.

### **Dusserah/Vijay Dashmi**

With the influx of the Punjabi Hindus, the Dusserah began to be celebrated in Srinagar with great 'eclat'. During the Dogra rule, Chandmari grounds (Now Toto ground Bata-mallu) and Hazuri Bagh in Srinagar became the centres of attraction for the city population on the eve of the Dusserah. Effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakaran and Meghnad are burned at sunset on this day.

There are other festivals like Holi and Diwali which are celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits also.

### **Holi**

Holi is a festival especially of Hindus of India. It was introduced in the Valley by Maharaja Gulab Singh. Kashmiri pandits also participate in this festivals. On this day Lord Krishna's play with Gopies is imitated and water mixed with different colours is sprinkled. Sweets are distributed on this day.

### **Dewali**

Dewali was introduced by Maharaja Gulab Singh in the valley. It is celebrated in the month of Oct.-Nov. Goddess Laxmi is worshiped on this day. Sweets are distributed and illumination are held on this day.

### **Har Chutturdashi**

Is held on the fourteenth day of waxing of moon in the month of Har (July)—at Khrew Village where Jawalamakhi temple is situated along with the ancient Lingum of Jawalamakh (Goddess of Fire). Brahmins of the valley visit the Tirtha (shrine) and pay homage along with husked rice (Tahar) mixed with liver and kidney parts of sheep which are distributed.



## FESTIVALS OF MUSLIMS

Fairs and festivals have played a very vital role in the life of the Kashmiri Muslims. Among their religious festivals are mentioned as under :

### **Moharram**

It is celebrated during the first week of Hijira year. Shias take out processions on the eve of Moharram. They recite the verses which extolled the heroic deeds of the heroes of Karbala, (Hassan and Hussain). The mourners beat their breasts and sometimes cause serious injuries to their bodies. With the spread of modern education most of the westernized Shia families have given up the practice of beating their breasts. It is during this month of Moharram that the Shias call meetings where mourners recite elegies. Feasts are arranged for the participants. The Sunni Muslims do not take part in these processions. Sunnis distribute cooked rice (tahr) and sharbat (Kand Sharbat) among the poor and children. According to Sunni Muslim belief the whole universe was created on this very day by Almighty and Adam and Eve were born on this day and Nooha's ark touched the shores of earth.

### **Urs Nabi**

Urs Nabi is the prophet Mohammad's birthday, it is also known as Id-i-Milad and is celebrated on 12th of Rabi-ul-Awal. On this day prophet's hair relic is displayed at Hazratbal (Nandpur) shrine. The boy's father sends presents to the girl which in the case of high class gentry, are reciprocated with bigger presents to the boy from the girl's father.

### **Miraj Alam (Sharif)**

It is celebrated on 26th of Rajab which means the Prophet's flight to Heaven. On this day also Prophet's Hair relic is displayed and prayers are held in every Muslim house. Big dishes are also prepared and friends and relatives are invited.

### **Id-ul-Fiter or Id Ramzan**

It is an important festival of the Muslims and is celebrated after the close of Ramzan fast. It is a thanks giving day

to almighty. Presents are given to nearest relatives, and friends. New clothes are put on this day and prayers are held in the open ground or Idgah which is essential.

### **Id-ul-Zuha (Id Qurban)**

It is an important festival of Muslims. They sacrifice a sheep on this day and distribute it among relatives and friends. Example of prophet Ibrahim who was about to sacrifice his son Ismail (Son of Hajira) before the Almighty when asked for instead a ram was offered to him after the Lord was pleased. On this day prayers are offered in the open grounds or in Idgah. After Id prayers sheep or goat is sacrificed. Presents are also sent by the father-in-Laws to their respective daughters-in-law and sons-in-law.

### **Shab-i-Barat**

Shab-i-Barat is celebrated on 14th of Shaban. On this night prayers are offered throughout the night and at places illuminations are held and money and other articles in alms are given.

### **Shab-i-Qadr**

It is celebrated on 26th of Ramzan, month of Fasts. Prayers are held throughout the night in shrines and mosques. Sweet dishes are prepared and nearest relatives are invited at the feast.

Among the other popular festivals of the Muslims of Kashmir, are as Under: I, Urs-i-Shah-Hamadan, Urs-i-Batmalloo, Urs-i-Chrar-i-Shariff, Urs-i-Makhdoom Sahib, Urs-i-pir Dastgir (Khanyar), Urs-i-Naqshaband Sahib and Urs-i-Rafiqul (Hardu Reshi, Anantnag) Islamabad). Some of the mohallas of Srinagar like Batmalloo, Khawaja Bazar, Khanqah are named after different saints. Writing about the participation of the villagers in the Hazratbal festival, Dr. Neve remarks :

"These are the great days to which the people, especially women and children look keenly forward ; for not only is there the display at the shrine, but the opportunity of showing off their best clothes and Jewellery, and of seeing the shops of the city and making their frugal purchases. A bundle on the man's back contains a few days' rice and condiments, and the

wife carries a fat cock as a present to the moullahs."

"From the economic point of view, fairs and festivals offered opportunities for buying and selling special kind of commodities. They attracted merchants and artisans and good business was done."

## RITUALS AND CEREMONIES

"The Muslims of the valley", says Lawrence, "may have retained for some time after their conversion to Islam, some of the Hindu customs of endogamy within the caste and exogamy outside the gotra, but there is no trace of these customs now and the different tribal names of krams are names and nothing more."

It is now possible for a Dar to marry a girl of the Ganai Kram and vice-versa, provided both are agriculturists. The intermarriage among the low caste wattals or scavengers is still a taboo. There is, however, a sort of caste system prevalent, in as much as the members of one profession prefer to marry their sons and daughters among the followers of a similar profession. Thus it is very rarely that goldsmiths (sonars) and blacksmiths (khars) contract marriage among themselves. The old krams or nicknames of pandit, Bhat, Dar etc., are however, still retained and new one also added by reason of the special calling of the head of the family or any of his ancestors or because of such peculiar circumstances which may have occurred to him.

"For instance", says a local writer, "a man, named Wasdev, had a mulberry tree growing in his courtyard and therefore he was called Wasdev Tul (mulberry). He in order to get rid of his nickname cut down the tree. But a mound (trunk) remained and people began to call him Wasdev Mund. He then removed the trunk of the tree but its removal resulted in a khud, he then filled up the depression but the ground became a teng (Mound) and he was called there upon Wasdev Teng. Thus, exasperated he gave any further attempt to remove the cause of this nickname and it continued to be Teng which is now attached to the name of his descendents."

The Sheikh Sayyids and pirzadas are still considered to be Krams of respectability among the Muslims. Mullahs or



priests though not numerous, are a class by themselves and every village has got a family or two to minister to the religious needs of people and to officiate at the birth, marriage or death ceremonies, Recently they have taken to agriculture and government service also; but otherwise they live by the free gifts of grains bestowed on them by the villagers at harvest time—called by locally as “Mangai.”

Coming from the same stock and possessing a common cultural heritage, the people of Kashmir have many resemblances in dress, social customs and ceremonies though grouped among themselves as the followers of two different faiths. These resemblances in certain social customs are even connected with birth, marriage and death. The sacred shrines of both the communities are situated close together and it is a frequent occurrence that the fairs at these shrines are also held on the same date. The system of Khanadamad, a variant of the Hindu custom of adoption (Mangta), is prevalent among both the communities. In all the important social functions of a Hindu his Muslim friends and neighbours take a keen and personal interest and vice versa.

Many of these ceremonies and rituals have undergone some minor changes among both the communities due to the impact and influence of modern education and economic conditions. For instance, the old system of having a grassy bed for the mother at the time of her confinement has been generally discarded. Similarly having costly and decorative dresses for the groom and display of the fireworks on festive occasions have increased and it is generally found that the sumptuous and prolong feasts with their social customs are increasing day by day. And due to free flow of wealth in the state marriage ceremonies cost more in both the communities and the groom's father places his demands before the bride's father with the result that the economically backward people cannot compete and are being axed. No reformer comes forth who could eradicate these social customs and evils which have grown during these past thirty years.

### **Kahnether**

Among both the communities now the birth of male child is hailed with joy while that of a girl evokes little or no plea-

sure for there is custom of dowries as already mentioned has increased. For eleven days after child is born the family and near relatives cannot perform any religious ceremonies among pandits. On the eleventh day a purification ceremony, the *kahnether* takes place. On that day the mother of the child leaves her home.

### **Shran Sunder**

A Yagia (Hawan) is performed and the child is given a name. Before this on the sixth day after confinement both the mother and the child are bathed. The bath is called Sunder (Shran) and after it lighted torches of birchbark are passed round of the head of the child and all persons present. The oldest lady of the house does this while repeating the words phrase "Shokh ta punasun" (happiness and more children).

### **Zerakashi**

Zarakashi is the hair cutting ceremony performed when a boy is about 4 or 5 years old. A small yagia (hawan) is performed and the boy's head is shaved leaving only a Choti (Small collection of hair) at the top. After the Yagia Sanskar relations and friends are treated to a feast.

### **Yagupaveet/Thread Ceremony**

The yagupaveet or sacred thread-ceremony, is one of the most important ceremonies in the life of pandit. It is performed before a boy attains the age of 12 years. The sacred thread is put round the boy's neck by his Guru and he is henceforth a twice born Brahman. From his relations who are present he begs alms for his Guru, money he gives to the guru. A few days earlier the *garnavi* (house-cleaning) *manzirat* (dyeing of the boy's hands with henna) and *divagon* (bath and anointment) ceremonies are performed. Relatives and friends invited to the accompanying feast generally make presents to the parents. The women sing songs daily after the *garnavai* ceremony has taken place. On the day following the main ceremony a *kushalhoma* is performed to mark the safe and pleasant termination of this important event. The guests then return to their homes. The young married women among them each receive a few rupees as

atagat (present). Their husbands are also presented with rupees, and one or two rupees are given to each child coming with the guests.

The marriage or vivah ceremonies also begin with the garnavi or house-cleaning. The manzirat and divagun then follow. On the wedding day the bride groom is dressed in a achkan and a pyjama and now in coat and pant with tie and dons coloured turban. A procession is formed in the courtyard of his home, where he takes his stand on the vyug (an outline of mystic signs drawn in lime and coloured clays). The oldest woman in the house then comes out and waves lighted lamps and feeds sweets to the couple, while the assembled relations (females folk) join in song and shower flowers over them. The bride groom is next taken to the house of the bride. He may go in a car and carries processionists in cars. Outside the bride's home the vyug ceremonies are performed and the wedding party are given a feast by the father of the bride. The lagan or nupital ceremony is then performed by the family priests of both the bride and bridegroom. Food placed before the couple who both eat from the same plate. After this hand in hand, they walk seven times round a lighted fire.

After the lagan, bride and bridegroom return to the latter's home. The bridegroom's party takes them in procession, the ceremony of vyug being repeated before starting. Arrived at the groom's house, the bride is first taken to the kitchen and the thakurdwar. She is then made to sit on cushions, while the assembled women burn incense and continue with their singing. The bridegroom's sister is the recipient of a good present in cash on this occasion. The next night the young newly married pair again go to the house of the bride's parents, where the groom receives presents from them in cash and kind. During the first year of marriage the bride's father sends her various such presents at festivals and on his own birthday, and those of his sons and daughters.

Marriages between boys and girls are generally before they pass 25th year and is able earn livelihood. The parents of the bride and the bridegroom are the final persons to choose the match. A fire-between mediator get the horoscope of marriageable and suitable boys to the father of the girl and



if the horoscope of a boy and girl tally, the inquiries are instituted regarding the social status and the economic position of the family of the boy, The appearance, health and the education of the boy today generally out-weigh all other considerations. Before the marriage ceremony, another custom, that of vak dan, has now come to the fore. when the parents of the bride and the bride-groom accompanied by their near relatives, meet in a common friend's house or in a local hotel and after partaking of sumptuous tea, solemnly agree to the marriage of their respective son and daughter.

Most of the ceremonies connected with death of a Kashmiri pandit are very elaborate. The dead body is washed and wrapped in a white shroud (kafan). A brief shrad ceremony is performed before the dead body is taken to cremation ground. There the ceremony is more elaborate which takes more than two hours. Before the dead body is put to fire pyre a nirvana ceremony with invocations to the Bharavs and chanting of hymns and mystic sounds is performed. The funeral pyre is lit by the son of the dead or by the nearest relatives. After the dead body is consumed by the fire, the mourners return. Before entering the house a fire is lighted at the ghat round which the mourners walk after taking a bath in the river. For ten days shradha ceremonies are performed at the ghat every morning and on 10th day the son or the chief mourner shaves his head to indicate the end of mourning. On the 11th and 12th days more shradhas are performed and then every month for the first year. After this yearly shradhas are performed. In all these ceremonies the priests get a good share in cash and kind given in a charity for the peace of the soul of the departed. On the monthly and annual shards the sons, daughters and daughters-in-law keep fast throughout the day.

### **Ceremonies of Muslims**

The Muslims sometimes marry their daughters and sons to some near relations and if this is not possible they ask some man who is generally known Manzimyour (mediator) to arrange for marriages. Custom of Khanadamad is prevalent among the cultivators and hanjis, but is slowly dying down. Now the middle class Muslims of the city and of the suburbs

have given up this system and marriages are arranged outside their relations. When the age of the girl reaches to puberty the father of the girl asks Manzimyour to seek a suitable match for the girl. The manzimyour arranges the marriage and relates highly coloured stories of the magnificance and generosity of his client. He generally narrates his gentleness, and his wealth. When a suitable match has been found the ceremony of betrothal (known as Nishayin) is performed. Some times on this occasion marriage contract (Niqah) ceremony is written, and commitment is made. Afterwards on four chief Muslim Holy days : Idul-Fiter, Idul-Zuha, Miraj Sharif and Urs Nabi, the boy's father sends present to the girl which in case of high class gentry are reciprocated with bigger presents to the boy from the girl's father. For a week before the marriage festivities and rejoicings are held in the houses of both the boy and the girl and invitations are issued to relatives and friends. The day before the marriage both in the city and villages the boy's father sends a quantity of mehndi (Henna) dye to the bride who paints her hands and feet with colour. On the marriage day the bridegroom after a bath, dresses himself properly and decks himself with the best clothing he can afford himself or borrow from his friends. His relatives and friends give him presents of money, known as Gulmeth, and then he and his party leaves for bride's house formerly on horses and now buses and cars. Before the bridegroom leaves for bride's house he sends ahead presents and palanquin (cars) in which the bride will return. This has now been given up in the city. As they draw near the bride's house the women of the bride's house come out singing the song of welcome and praising the bridegroom's qualities. When the whole party is assembled the grand groom sits on cushions and the feast commences, some times tea is served before feast. At times when the Niqah ceremony (marriage contract) is not written a Molvi or Imam of nearby mosque is called who writes it out and in return receives some money for his work. Before this is done the two fathers of the contracting parties fix the amount of mehr or dowry according to the custom of the family. In the city it is now generally equivalent to Rs. 9000/-. Meanwhile the bride and her friends examine the wedding presents and when all is ready the bride in a best dress

is carried by her brother or maternal uncle into the palanquin (Now in villages). The bride departs with her husband and is accompanied by her female relatives (Dudh Maj). She instructs her in the formalities which have to be observed. In her father-in-law's house she is received with great enthusiasm and parties of singing women come out to greet her ; and she is taken into a room arranged for her reception where she takes her seat with her eyes downcast until her mother-in-law comes and raises her face. She abstracts from the bride's handkerchief some money which is her perquisite (hashkant). Then all the women of the bride groom's family kiss the bride's hands and place rupees in it. A big feast is given on the marriage night known as Wathal and next day the guest depart. The bride remains seven days in her husband's house, then discarding her bridal dress She puts on clothes given by her father-in-law, Wathijjor and sets off for her father's house. It generally takes months before the father of the girl is able to invite his son-in-law to a feast called Fersal at his house. This system has now been discarded in the city. Father-in-law invites his son-in-law along with guests during days when the bride is in her husband's house. He receives cash presents etc., then there is no bar of their coming or going. The houses of bride's father and bride groom's father are known by the name of Huhur and Warev.

### **Death Ceremony**

When a Muslim approaches his death he is laid with his head towards north or east. At the time of death relatives who visit him call on the name of God and verses from Quran. When he passes away they break into weeping. The corpse is then bathed and wrapped in a shroud and carried to the graveyard in a wooden coffin (tabut) which can readily be procured from a nearby mosque. The tabut is covered with black cloth from a shrine nearby. The burial is accompanied with recitations of the holy verses from the Quran and other sacred books. The mourners then pray for the peace of the soul of the departed and return to their homes. For some till the coming friday. the chief mourner daily visits the grave with the mulla and offers prayers. On the next friday, all the



friends and relatives of the departed gather at the grave and offer *fatiha* or prayers. They then return to the house of the chief mourner and are served with light refreshments. For a year or two the mulla receives alms from the house of the departed on certain muslim holidays, now in villages only. The graveyard is planted with irises, tulips narcissi and some spring flowers. Many rituals and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death have, however, undergone reforms in consequence of modern socio-economic necessities.

The Muslim population of the valley is divided into the Sunni and the Shia sects, the former being in a prepondering majority. They have monopolised the papier mache trade and during the hey-day of the shawl industry they were the proprietors of shawl factories. Since there was an unbalanced ceremony between the shawl weavers who were generally Sunnis and the capitalists, numerous Shia-Sunni riots took place then, the interested parties lending a religious tinge to these. The last Shia-Sunni conflict was in 1870 A.D.

There are some settlements of Pathans and Moghuls in certain parts of the valley reminiscent of their rule; but now they have been absorbed in the general population of the country.

The bomb (Bombas) and Koikh ((khakha) are the inhabitants of the Jhelum Valley below Baramulla in Tehsils of Uri Muzaffarabad (Pak held Kashmir). They were a source of constant terror to the Kashmiris till Maharaja Gulab Singh subdued them. They used to carry out marauding expeditions (Loot and arson) into the valley and even now our mothers quieten our crying children by saying that *khoikh* (khakhas) have come. They now follow the peaceful professions of agricultural and goverment service and trade.

Boatmen or Hanjis are well developed by the hard labour of towing and paddling the boats which were once their means of livelyhood. They have now adopted different avocations of trade. They are an ancient race and the *Rajatarangini* often mentions the *Nishads* (boatmen). They have been brought from Sangaldip modern Singapore and have been settled here. Some Hanjis claim Hazrat Noah as their ancestor but it is generally believed that they were Kashtrys before their conversion to Islam. They still disdainfully

refer to a novice at boatcraft as a Shudra. There are many classes of boatmen known according to the boat they ply and live in. The Bahach (barge) boatmen have recently taken to timber and grain trades and with the rise in their standard of life have acquired a respectability over other hanjis. They own buses and carrier trucks and rice husking machines. The doonga and houseboat hanji looks cleaner and can speak pigeon English and Urdu fairly well. He is intelligent and at a very short notice can perform the duties of an accomplished butler or an expert cook, a seasoned shikari or an experienced guide. Most of the visitors owe their happy and trouble free holiday in the Valley to the hanji. There are other classes of hanjis that is Mar Hanji or Dal hanji who carries vegetables to the city markets from the dal vegetables gardens. The gari hanji are those who collect singhara (water nut) from the Wular lake, and sell it in the city market. The Gada hanji or fishermen are well known for their close communal feelings and generally their brothers when they are in distress, specially in the wind storms of Wular lake.

### **Dress of Kashmiris**

The dress of Kashmiris has often been criticised for being effeminate and conducive to lazy habits. It is a long loose gown but toning at the neck and falling to the ankles. In winter it is made of wool and in summer of cotton. There is very little difference between the phiran worn by men and women. A pyjama of the loose type is generally worn under the phiran and this is all the dress of an average villager of Kashmir. The women wear a skull cap surrounded by a fillet of red colour known as Qasaba in the case of Muslim and a fillet of white cloth in the case of a pandit woman known as tarenga. A shawl or a white chaddar thrown gracefully over the head and shoulders, more as a protection from the sun than to hide the features completes their headgear. Old men wear a turban which is a sign of respectability and affluence. It is now dying down and the new generation put on cap and generally roam bare headed. The ordinary peasant is content with wearing the long pointed skull cap. In winter a kangri (fire pot) is taken under the phiran to keep oneself warm. It consists of an earthen jar of about six inches diameter covered

with a basket of wickerwork. Charcoal cinders of the special type are put in it to give a constant and a continuous heat.

When Emperor Akbar, conquered Kashmir in 1586, the Kashmiris offered a stiff resistance and Moghuls army was defeated near Srinagar, so in order to do away with the martial spirit of Kashmiris he forced the kashmiris through Qasim Khan the Moghul Governor to wear the effeminate phiran in order to degrade them. Otherwise it is said that before the advent of the Moghul rule they wore a short coat, trousers blanket. A crusade was launched against its use by patriotic Kashmiris like S.M. Abdullah, Kashyap Bhandu and late Jia Lal Kilam and others which resulted in the change to graceful saree, shalwar, Kamiz during the thirties.

#### **Diet of Kashmiris**

The staple food of the Kashmiris is rice. They take plenty of vegetables but the favourite dish is the hak or Karam sag. In the cities mutton is consumed in large quantities but in the villages it is still a luxury reserved only for festive occasions. Although being inhabitants of a cold country, Kashmiris abhor the use of intoxicating drinks.

They have however found a cheap and harmless alternative in tea which they take so often. Its preparation is also quite different, salt being used instead of sugar. Green tea leaves are boiled and to give it a pink colour a little soda bicarb is added. Every time is tea time in a Kashmiri home and the samovar is generally steaming throughout the day. It would be sheer discourtesy to allow even an odd visitor to leave the house without serving him with a hot piping cup of pink-coloured tea.

“Kashmiris Character: Kashmiri has been called a mystical and imaginative. His environment has made him so. Climate of the Valley its snowy peaks and flowing silvery streams and sublime solitudes have induced his frame of mind. Buddhism, Vedantism, and the mysticism of Islam have found a congenial home in Kashmir. Panditji and Pirsahib had made him superstitious and mysticism have ingrained in the very nature of the Kashmiri.” Lawrence calls us *pir parast* that is saint worshippers. He believes that the “saints will aid if men called” and a dead saint is more efficacious than a living



priest. Even on the anniversary of a saint's death men will abstain from food and Kashmiris far away in India observe this fast as is done in the case of anniversary of Rishis, like the Rishi Malau or Hardu Rishi's at Islamabad (Anantnag) near Jama Masjid. It is a unique fair and the majority of both the communities abstain from meat for a week in Oct.-Nov. At the end of it cooked rice radish eggs form part of the feast. Even on Bhatmol's anniversary a fair is held in April at Batmalu localit Srinagar both communities take part and abstain from meat. A native of Kashmir is not conservative but is impregnable to new ideas. He is kind to his wife and children. Divorce scandal, cases of immorality and murders are very rare. He is hospitable and entertains his guests most cheerfully. Crimes against person or property seldom occur. Even his snakes have no poison except viper in Dachigam and Chashmashahi Rakh. Kashmiri is no drunkard or opium eater. He has simple habits. "Kashmiris," wrote Dr. Bernier are celebrated for wit, and considered much more intelligent and ingenious than Indians. In poetry and the Sciences they "are not inferior than persians; They are also very active and industrious....."

".....The people of Kashmir are proverbial for their clear complexions and fine forms. They are well made as Europeans," Another traveller G.T. Vigne calls the Kashmiri "the Neapolitan of the East."

Kashmiri has a devotion for his own vale. He does not willingly leave his own country. The climate, food and the mood of life of a large part of India are often strange to him as they are to the visitor. The attachment which the Kashmiri feels to his own land is confined to the vale of Kashmir. To be sent to Kargil or Leh is exile and the Kashmiri longs to be back in Srinagar or its neighbourhood where there is life warmth and abundance. The State of Kashmir is a political creation but for the Kashmiri as for history his country is only the vale of Kashmir, the territory of Jhelum (Vitasta) and its tributaries from its source to Baramulla. It is this which is distinctive and which receives his affection. Its tradition, its customs its sacred places of pilgrimage, its arts and crafts are remembered, cherished and transmitted from generation to generation and the result is that the general impression

is one of continuity and identity.

Kashmiris are given to tea. It has been found cheap and harmless substitute which they take often. Its preparation is also quite distinct. Salt is often used than sugar.

Kashmiris have easy and pleasant lives. In times of danger they show much courage and endurance. Their physique, their character, their language are so marked as to produce a nationality of its own. Intellectual superiority, keenness of perceptions, clearness of mind and ingenuity dominate their character. Alert intelligence, quick wit and artistic feel show in them signs of a bright future. They are essentially of mild and cheerful disposition. Their versatile genius wins laurels for them every where. They are extremely hospitable and carry the arts of life to high perfection. "Angels, no angles" they surely are. Sir Francis Young Husband remarks, "In spite of the splendid Moghuls, brute Pathans, bullying Sikhs and rude Dogras, the Kashmiris ever remained the same." The conquerors came in hordes but they scarcely touched the soul of the people. Kashmiris are still what they were in spite of them all, says Bernier. They have always lived their self centered clever and conservative peculiarities are noticed in them.

Kashmiri Brahmins eat meat and are excluded by the Indian Brahmins and form a separate class, and are loose in their observances. The valley is singularly free from any modern intermixture of foreign races and they are proclaimed as one of the highest and purest races in the world. They are very handsome with chiselled features and a strong athletic figure but none of them are of martial proclivities of women, Col. Alexander writes that women of Kashmir are beautiful and enchantingly handsome. Mr. Wilson refers to the legend of two angels Harut and Marut having been ensnared by the beauty of Kashmir women. Mr. Victor Jacque Mont a French naturalist writes, "Know that I have never seen any where such hideous witches as in Cashmere."

Once when a Zenana Missionary was impelled to say, "O dear Kashmiri women why won't you wash;" They looked at her wondering and replied, "we have been so oppressed that we do not care to be clean." Perhaps this answer explains the fact that under oppressive rule during the Pathans and Sikh



times cleanliness involved imposition and abduction. Many of our young beautiful girls were kidnapped and forcibly admitted in the Mughal and Pathan courts either as wives or concubines and thus the habit of uncleanness was forced on women of this land. George Forster who visited Kashmir in 1783 A.D. says that Kashmiri Women are fairer in complexion not uncommonly blue eyed but simple and attractive in appearance, as compared to wheat coloured hard boned peasant women of the Punjab, the dark complexioned women of other parts of India. A Pandit lady appears to be more delicately featured very often but a muslim lady is more vigorous and seems to possess a stronger stamina. Apparently one may consider this to be due to caste restrictions in one case and a wider field in other. Now since the dawn of freedom women are enjoying decent living and have entirely changed their outlook. She moves freely in societies and she ranks amongst the best of the world.

Untouchability between the two sister communities is unknown. Often they work together, eat together, sleep together and sit together and feel no grudge for each other. They live peacefully. One may annoy him but the Kashmiri will never tend to offend him. To provoke his neighbour is not his scheme. Self defence he leaves to the mercy of God. When sore pressed he may employ the weapon of passive resistance. Otherwise that too has got no meaning with him. Surely he is above the average human level.

"When Kashmiris quarrel they call one another by bad names, and will occasionally go so far as to knock off a turban or seize an adversary by his effeminate gown. The sight of blood is abhorrent to them. The Kashmiri can turn his hand to anything. He is an excellent cultivator when he is working for himself. He is a good gardener, and has a considerable knowledge of horticulture. He can weave excellent woollen cloth and can make first-rate baskets. He can build himself a house, can make his own sandals, and make his own ropes. There is scarcely a thing which he cannot do, and as there are no middlemen like the Banyan of India, the Kashmiri is his own man of business. He understands profits and loss, and does not often make a bad bargain. He is, of course like all orientals, conservative and does not



accept very readily crude suggestions regarding reforms in agriculture. I have at last induced them to cut down thistles, though the conservative party urged that the young thistles were an extremely pleasant vegetable in the spring. The Kashmiri can quote in support of his system of agriculture, and indeed in support of every act of his everyday life, some shying proverb, and he is essentially a man of routine. Everything in their lives, ploughing, sowing, sheep-shearing etc., has its proper time, and the time is determined by the day on which sun enters Aries and spring commences (the Nauroz) and the day on which the sun enters Libra (the Mezan) and the autumn begins." Lawrence.

"Kashmir is a very old country, and its people are very old fashioned. Those who have studied the history of Kashmir say that the people have not changed much since the times of ancient Hindu kings. This is quite possible but I think that many of the hard things said about Kashmiris are due to the fact that the official interpreters of their character have been foreigners often grasping and corrupt, always unsympathetic." Lawrence.

William Moorcraft visited and stayed in Kashmir Valley during the first half decade of Sikh Rule, he wrote on every aspect of life in Kashmir, be it social economic, commercial or political. Observers he on the character and Potentialities of the inhabitants:

"The natives of Kashmir have been always considered as amongst the most lively and ingenious people of Asia, and deservedly so. With a liberal and wise government they might assume an equally high scale as a moral and intellectual people. The complexion of the Kashmirians varies from dark to olive, and is some-times ruddy and transparent—the eyes are large and full, the nose is well defined and commonly of an aquiline form. He (Kashmiri) has great ingenuity as mechanic and a decided genius for manufactures and commerce. Of their food and menu, Moorcraft says : "The food of those who can afford it is partly a meat mutton of goats or sheep. Which sells at about three pence per pound. Beef is not procurable as the sikh ruler punishes the death of a cow capitally. The chief food of the people is vegetable, turnip cabages, radishes, the singhara or water-nut and rice.

As already mentioned Kashmiris are very quick in arguments. The beauty of the women of Kashmir is of ancient and worldwide reputation. She is claimed as one of the first among the sex as a fine example by nature's love, best handwork. The female human form is divine—so says Mr. Wakefield.

## Chapter II

# Sources of History

Mirza Haider Dughlat in a moment of exasperation once remarked that inspite of the fame of Kashmir as one of most celebrated countries of the world, "no one knows anything about its present state nor can any of its features or history be learned from the books of the former writers." This impression was both hasty and fallacious and has been shown by the results of the labours which Dr. Stein and his fore runner Dr. Buhler bestowed on the Rajtarangni of Kalhan Pandit. To quote Dr. Steen Kashmir can claim the distinction of being the only region of India which possesses an uninterrupted series of written records of its history, going back beyond the period of Muslim rule and deserving the name of real chronicles. The statement signifies the importance of Sanskrit chronicles and other MSS of ancient period.

### 1. Sanskrit Chronicles

Let us first mention the semi historical importance of the works of Damodara Gupta, the Prime Minister of King Jaya Pid (755 to 786 A.D.) and Ksemendra the great Polyhistor who flourished in the middle of 11th century. The former wrote Kuttani-Mattam Kavya and amongst the later works. those relevant to over purpose Desopadesa, Narmala and Lokprakasha which were composed in the second and third quarters of the 11th century. They constitute a landmark in the field of general literature. And so far as the study of sociological trends before the establishment of Islam is concerned, all the three works are very important.

(a) *Kuttani-Mattam Kavya* : It is a didactic poem. It is in the form of advice tendered to a prince by a Kuttani or procures. She, tells how to escape the wills of a corrupt women. Apparently sexual vices seem to have degraded society. The society and the home of an average Kashmiri were influened by the Kuttani to such an extent that to this day



her exploits survive in the degraded popular expression phapha Kuttam. And Damodara Gupta attempted to root out the evil not by legislation but by educating public opinion.

(b) Desopodesa and Narmala similarly illuminate the social and administrative life of the people of the Kashmir under Hindu rule. In Desopodesa Ksemendra depicts the life and characters of Khals (Villian), Kadarya (miser) prostitute, Kuttani (procuress), old man marrying a young girl, and foreign students receiving instructions in the Maths etc. Narmala may be treated as an addendum to Desopadesa. It describes the character of Kayasthas or the official community. In fact, Kayasthas by their unsocial activities, vicious conduct and unspeakable cruelties had become the disgraceful element of the society.

(c) *Lokprakash* : The monumental work is an encyclopedia, a dictionary and a practical hand book all in one, dealing with many sociological, economic and administrative subjects. Merit lies in its humility. No where does he claim originality in the preparation of his monumental work. He frankly acknowledges his debt to the labours of his predecessors. He describes his work in an endeavour to give connected account where the narrative of past events had become fragmentary in many respects. He (Kshemendra) made a thorough study of Inscriptions, written texts, popular traditions to prepare it.

No history of Kashmir is complete without a thorough study of the Raj-Tarangni of Kalhan as a back ground. We possess two excellent English translations one by Dr. Stein and the other by R.S. Pandit, and now by Dr. Saxena. But the scholarly introduction, excellent commentary and copious notes, accompanying Dr. Stien's admirable edition render his work unique and indispensable.

The sources of ancient and medieval history of Kashmir are classified into two categories:

1. The rich collection of indigenous records, (traditions, archaeological and numismatic finds;
2. Foreign chronicles, (records of travellers) and some recent discoveries in places adjacent to our state.

**Nilmat-puran**

The earlier text which our master historian Kalhan Pandit used while writing *Rajatarangni* of earlier periods from a work which is entitled the *Nilamatapuran*. The date of *Nilamatapuran* is uncertain. It is work of antiquity which dates back to the accession of the karkotas. Some scholars assign that the mention of Budha is in the work as an incarnation of Visnu belongs not earlier than the 7th century A.D. It claims to give sacred legends regarding the origin of the valley and the special ordinances which Nila the God of serpent had revealed for his worship and rites to be observed by the people of the valley to ward off the evil intention of Pishachas. It contains the description and legends of various tirthas in the valley which help us in reconstructing the ancient Geography of Kashmir. We come to know how the valley was occupied by the Pishachas under their King Nikumbha. Nikumbha left the valley with the whole of his army at the beginning of spring. Then the men came to Kashmir lived during the summer and after gathering their harvest left the valley before the advent of the winter. No human being could live in the valley due to excessive cold. This continued for four Yugas. Then came a Brahmin named Candradeva who prayed before Nila that in future people should be allowed to live in Kashmir during the winter to which Naga king (Nila) agreed. Henceforth there was no excessive snowfall or trouble from Pishachas and then men came to live in the valley throughout the year. There is no doubt that *Nilmatpuran* is a hand book of rites and ceremonies which were then observed by the people of ancient Kashmir. Kalhana used its sources and hence the greatest importance of the work.

**Mahatmyas**

There are more sources than *Nilmat puran*. One of these is *Mahatmyas*—which depicts the geography of Kashmir particularly of ancient period. It is useful for the interpretation of various legends connected with the sacred sites of Kashmir. At least there is nothing to prove that this bulk of literary works composed before pre-muslim in Kashmir.

**Srikanthcarita**

Mankha or Mankhaka wrote this poem. The theme of the work is the puranic legend of Siva's overthrow of Tripura. It depicts the seasons, the sunsets, the sunrises, courtscenes, amusements in its Kavyas. Mankha had three other brothers, Sringara, Bhanga and Alamkara, all employed as state officials. Mankha himself held a high office under Jayasimha. The twenty-fifth of the Srikanthcarita is interesting as it gives the names of thirty contemporary scholars, poets and officials. Though as a pupil of the famous rhetorician Ruyyaka, Mankha shows some cleverness in rhetorical ornaments. It is admitted that his work lacks lucidity of expression, freshness and variety.

Mankha mentions some of his contemporary poets in the last canto of his book. They are Ananda (84) Kalyana (80) Garg (50). Govinda (77) Jalhana (75) Patu (131), Padmaraja (86), Budha (82), Losthadeva (36), Vagisvara (127), Srigarbha (50) Srivatsa (82).

**Rajatarangni**

Kalhan Pandit—the celebrated poet-historian of Kashmir was the son of a high official of the state. His father Canpaka was the 'dvarapati' or commandant of the frontier passes. He held the charge of Doodagata pass which is identified as Tragbal Bandipora pass during the reign of King Harshadev. Kalhan's ambition of life was to write a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir. When Jayasimha became King after the death of Sussal (A.D. 1127). Kalhan became his court-poet. He composed his Rajatarangini between the year 1149-50 A.D.

According to tradition, Kalhan wrote another poem Jaya-Simhabhyudaya, probably an eulogy of his patron, King Jayasimha of Kashmir. The book has not yet been discovered but a verse from this poem has been quoted in Ratnaktha-Sarasa-muccaya.

Though Kalhan does not say anything about his own caste, he seems to be a Brahmana. His vast learning as expressed in the Rajatarangini accords well with the reputation generally enjoyed by the Brahmin pandits of Kashmir. Kalhan's sympathy towards the Brahmanas, as revealed in the pages of the Rajatarangini, also tends to show that he



was probably a Brahmana. Every doubt in this regard is dispelled by Jonaraja, the writer of the *Dvitya Rajatarangini*, who calls Kalhana clearly as 'dvija' Kalhana was a Shaivite in his religious belief. In the *Rajatarangni*, he pays his devotion in the opening verse of each taranga to the Lord Shiva and his consort Gauri.

The *Rajatarangini* consists of eight books or tarangas. The first book deals with the Gonada dynasty, several local rulers, Ashoka and his successors, the Tataras, i.e., the Kushans and Huns. Book II treats of a line of Kashmir ruler unconnected with Gonada's dynasty. The third book begins with the restoration of the Gonada dynasty and mentions several rulers among whom Pravar sena and perhaps Toramana may be recognized as historical figures. Book IV starts with the accession of the karkota dynasty. Some of the kings belonging to this dynasty, are also known from other sources. The Karkota dynasty was overthrown by the Utpalas. The history of the Utpala dynasty occupies the fifth book of Kalhan. The sixth taranga of the *Rajatarangini* describes Kashmir under the descendants of Viradeva and Abhinava. The seventh book opens with the accession of Samgramaraja of the Lohara kingdom to the throne of Kashmir and ends with the dethronement and death of Harsa. The eighth book starts with the accession of the second Lohara dynasty and gives a long account of the reigns of Uccala, Sussala and Sussala's son Jayasimha, the reigning sovereign of Kalhan's time. It is not only Mahakavya but also admirable collection of historical facts presented in an illuminating garb of poetry and soars in the reign of the fine art.

Kalhan tells us the materials which he used for his narrative. He mentions several previous writers on the history of Kashmir. Among these were Suvrata "whose work," he he says, "was made difficult by misplaced learning; Kshemendra who drew up a list of kings *Nrapavali*, of which no part was free from mistakes. Kshemendra was of wealthy parentage, well educated, and had travelled extensively abroad. He belonged to the present locality of Nishat Bagh probably. Nilamuni, who wrote the *Nilamatpurana*; Helaraja, who composed a list of kings, in twelve thousand verses; and Srimihira or Padamihira, and the author *Sri-Chavil-akara*. His

own work was based on eleven collections of Rajakathas or stories about kings and on the works of Nilamuni. He further tells us that he took the help of many inscriptions, grants and manuscripts to write his book.

Some of the sources mentioned above, were themselves of uncertain historical character. Hence the early part of his work have become conglomeration of history and vague legends. From the fourth book onwards the poet-historian, gives us materials of truly historical character, presumably from coins and inscriptions and other indigenous sources. The seventh and eighth books are clear and full of facts. The reason is that Kalhana was a contemporary of the kings of the eighth book and for the history of Harshadev and other immediately preceding rulers, he had most probably informations from his father and other older contemporaries.

"The Rajatarangini," says Pt. Nehru, "is a rich storehouse of information; political, social and to some extent economic." It is not only a work of serious contribution to history, but also a work of art. "In one long series, as if one on a band of gelatine of a cinematograph film, Kalhana brings before our eyes vivid pictures of a bygone age, through episodes which contain the different rasas or sentiments of love and heroism, of pathos and marvels."

During the 10th century we have a prolific writer Mahamashshera Abhinavagupta. He obtained a great reputation in the field of poetics as in Savadariana. From a study of the concluding portion of his two works, *Tantraloka* and *Paratrimshikavivarana*, we learn that he was born in a reputed Brahmin family at Isheber (Gupta-ganga) near Nishat-bagh. His grand father was Varahgupta, his father was Narasimhagupta alias Cukhala, and his younger brother was Manorothagupta. In quest of learning, he travelled over various parts of Kashmir and also visited many places outside the valley. Among his teachers were Bhattenduraja, Lakshmanagupta and Bhatta Tauta.

Abhinavagupta wrote as many as forty one books, some of which exist, while several are known only by name. His *Locana* is an extremely profound and difficult commentary on Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka*. He remained a celibate all his life and in his later life became an ascetic. He disappeared

along with his 1200 disciples in a cave in the mountains of Briva Tehsil.

Another scholar Bilhana who belonged to present Khanamoh village gives a graphic account of his native land in his poem *Vikramankadevacarita*. He gives a glowing picture of beauties of the capital, (Srinagar) Kashmir, which though laudatory in nature is exact in local details. In another passage the poet describes his rural home and its surroundings at the village Khonamusha (modern Khonamuh), 9 miles to the south of Srinagar.

After Bilhana, we come to the account of poet Shamboo who lived in the court of King Harshadev. His *Rajendara Karanpura* is high flown panegyric eulogising his patron and his *Anyukti-mukta-lata* is a collection of verses on various topics indicating indirect meaning.

Among the minor works which were composed during the last days of Hindu rule, mention may be given of *Haracaritacintamani* of Jayadratha. It was probably written in the 12th and 13th century. In a simple *kavya* style, the book relates in 32 cantos many legends connected with Shiva and his incarnations, some of these legends are placed in famous Kashmirian shrines.

### **Rajatarangini of Zoonaraj**

It is the earliest contemporary chronicle composed during the period when Kashmir was ruled by Kashmiri Sultans. Zoonaraj was a learned and orthodox Brahmin and one of the judicial advisors of Sultan-i-Zainulabdin (1420-70 A.D.) He wrote in continuation of *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana and brought down the account to the year 1459 A.D. He tells us that he composed his work at the express order of Sultan who he says was anxious that the long gap in the history of Kashmir should be filled up. Zoonaraj had brief material at his discretion to construct the narrative. He frankly confesses that his work is an outline of the history of kings. Beyond mentioning the names of the Hindu kings who succeed Jayasimha (1128-55), the last king mentioned by Kalhan, Zoonaraj does not throw any light on the life and condition of the people inhabiting Kashmir before Muslim rules began, i.e., 1320 A.D. Nor does he enlighten us on the causes which were responsible for the



downfall of Hindu rule in Kashmir. The value of the chronicle becomes very important as it approached his own time, but cannot be compared with Kalhan's *Rajatarangini*.

### **Jaina-Rajatarangini**

Pandit Srivar who is believed to be the pupil of Zoonaraj does not find any fault of his Guru's writings. Srivar yielded a great influence with Sultan Zain-ul-abdin. He was his faithful friend and continued to enjoy royal patronage during the reign of Haider Shah (1470-72 A.D.), as well as Hassan Shah (1472-84). He acted as Hassan Shah's teacher when he was prince. He was an excellent musician and acted as the Director of Music in the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah. *Rajatarangini* was taken in hand after the death of Zoonaraj by Shrivar in the last decade of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin's reign. He was dedicated to Sultan and tells us that he received various benefits and gifts of wealth and of land from the king, who brought him up like his son.

He undertook to write the chronicle partly to free himself from the endless obligation to him, and partly "because I am attracted by his merits." Shrivar does not appear to have undertaken the work at the bidding of Sultan while giving the accounts of the reign of Hassan Shah. Shrivar states, "I have witnessed the prosperity, the misfortunes and the death of kings with my own eyes and remembered the events." His *Rajatarangini* is a history of less than 30 years (1459-86). It is exhaustive comprising 238 pages in translation (Dutt's translation—*Kings of Kashmir*), whereas the chronicles of Zoonaraja which is narrative of about 300 years covers only 97 pages. Dr. Stein indologist accuses the author for betraying ignorance of ancient names of well known localities.

### **Rajvali Pathika**

The authors of *Praja Bhatt* and *Suka*, Shrivar's chronicle was continued by Pandit *Praja Bhatt* under the name of *Rajvali Pathika*—it is a history of 27 years only (1486-1513). The author found it impossible to continue the narrative owing to the political disturbances in the kingdom and an account of the, "fear of the wicked". Such conditions lasted until 1586 A.D. when Akbar the Mughal Emperor annexed Kashmir.

to his empire. After about 10 years in 1598 A.D. Pandit Suka another Brahmin Chronicler took upon himself his task not because to become a poet but to lighten 'my mind' of the mass of accounts of bygone kings. He started his work in 1513 where Praja Bhatt had suddenly stopped but he retained the title given by Praja Bhatt to his work. -

Sukha refers in his introduction that the narrative of Praja Bhatt's 27 years account has been lost. He summarises the events of these 27 years in 50 verses. He wrote almost 85 years after Praja Bhatt. His sources are scanty. He sweeps through in a disorderly, haphazard and unchronological order. He does not mention anything about Mirza Haider Dughlat. There are certain gaps and Sukha does not mention. He is entirely ignorant. These chronicles of Zoonaraj Pandit, Shrivar Pandit and Sukha Pandit have now been translated into English by Dutt brothers (Jagdes Chander Dutt and Romesh Chander Dutt).

English version of Raja Tarangini of Kalhan Pandit appeared between 1879-87 in two volumes. Another title is kings of Kashmira. In 1898, he brought out the English translation of the chronicles of Zoonaraja Pandit, Shrivar Pandit and Sukha Pandit in one volume.

### **Chinese Sources**

The Chinese records have revealed to us some portions of ancient history of Kashmir. The greatest Chinese authority on Kashmir is the pilgrim scholar and traveller Huein Tsang who visited Kashmir in A.D. 631 and stayed here for two years for studying "Sutras and Sastras". He reached Srinagar via Baramulla (Varmul pass). He found Buddhism flourishing. He was given a warm reception by the King of Kashmir at Baramulla and gave him twenty scribes to copy the sacred books and Sastras and also deputed five men to wait on him and to furnish him free of expenses with what ever was required.

The next Chinese pilgrim, scholar and traveller who has left an account of Kashmir is Ou Kong who reached Kashmir in 1750 A.D. He took his full vows of a regular monk. He resided in the country for four years spending his time mainly in visiting holy places and in studying Sanskrit. He has left an ocean of information in his travel account for us.

Another Chinese pilgrim who visited Kashmir was Chemong. He was probably the first Chinese traveller to enter the valley of Kashmir, and has left memorable accounts of his visit. He says Buddhism was in a flourishing state in Kashmir.

Another reference of Kashmir is found in the annals of the Tang Dynasty of China. These mention the arrival at the imperial court of China the first embassy from Kashmir sent by King Tchento-lo-pi-li in 713 A.D. and that of another embassy sent by his brother and successor Mu-to-pi. (Lalata-datyā-Muktaped). The kings have been identified as Chandrapida and Muktapeda Lalatadatya. This is what the Chinese have to tell us about Kashmir. Chandrapeda accepted the overlordship of the Chinese emperor.

### **Persian Sources**

The next foreigner from whom we get information of real value is Alberuni, the great Muslim scholar who flourished in the court of Mohammad of Gaznavi (A.D. 996-1031). He tells us the political conditions of India—placed in the way of his collecting statistics of the remote valley, but Alberuni has succeeded in giving us the accounts of Kashmir which is more fuller than that of other parts of India. His informants and teachers were it seems Kashmiri scholars. Regarding the people and the country he writes, "the inhabitants of Kashmir are pedestrians and they have no riding animals. The nobles among them ride in palankins called Kati, carried on the shoulders of men. They are specially anxious about the natural strength of the country and therefore always take great care to keep a strong hold from the entrances and routes leading into it. In consequence it is very difficult to trade with them."

### **Tarikh-Kashmir by Syed Ali**

It was written in the reign of Sultan Yousuf Shah Chakk and completed after the Mughal conquest of Kashmir. It is history of Kashmir to the time of Yousuf Shah. "The author" says Prof. Mohibbul Hassan, "was a Baihaqi Sayyid and was related to the Shah Mir family through his mother who was the sister of Sultan Nazuk Shah. His father's name was Sayyid Muhammad, who served Mirza Haider in his wars in Kashmir. Sayyid Ali also appears to have been in the service of Mirza



Haider and took part in the last campaign which led to latter's death. The existing manuscript Sayyid Ali's *Tarikh* commences with the arrival in Srinagar in the reign of Sultan Shihabu Din of Sayyid Taji-Uddin, who was sent by Sayyid Ali Handani to see the field for propagation. Some portions of the book contain biographical sketches of suffis and Rishis who flourished during the Sultanate period. The work is valuable for the religious history of the period. For the political history it is important because it is the earliest Persian chronicle of Kashmir known to exist.

### **Baharistani Shahi**

It is one of the earliest history of Kashmir in persian by an anonymous author. Popular tradition believes his name to have been Mirza Mehdi. The date of its starting the compilation is 996 A.H. = 1586 A.D. and its date of completion 1023 A.H. = 1614 A.D.; The author is Shia Muslim and was probably in the service of Baihaqi Sayyids for he describes their careers in greater detail than other chroniclers do. Its sources are Zonaraj, Shrivar, and the persian accounts of Mulla Ahmad Nadiri, Qazi Ibrahim and Hasan Qari. He was living at the time when later Shah Mir dynasty rulers and Chakk rulers were the masters of this state. So he has penned down the narratives from his personal experience and from older people. This is the only work which relates in detail the life of Yusuf Shah and Yaqub Shah in exile and the manner of their death. It is an important source.

### **Tarik-Kashmir by Malik Haider Chaddur**

The author of this book is Rais ul Mulk Haider Malik of Chadur about 12 kilometers in the south of Srinagar. He accompanied his master Yusuf Khan (son of Hussain Shah Chak Sultan of Kashmir (1563-1570 A.D.) and not Yusuf Shah Chak the penultimate Sultan of Kashmir as alleged by Rieu and after him by Prof. Storey. to Bengal and later on rose in favour of Nur-ud-Din Jehangir and became a Governor of Kashmir. It is a sort of his family annal in persian but contains important contemporary evidence for Mughal invasion of Kashmir. He gives an eye witness account of the murder of Sher Afghan, of the way he escorted Mehr-ul-Nisa to the

court and won the favour of the Emperor.

Haider Malik was an architect and builder too. Jehangir employed him to lay out a canal from the Sindh river to irrigate Noor-afza garden. He constructed a water-fall and the stream at Vernagh. He built Jamia Masjid of Srinagar, which was burnt down by the great fire in 1621 A.D. He also built Khanaqah of Noor-Bakshiya of Mir Shamas-din Iraqi at Zadibal, Srinagar. Haider Malik's history is a valuable document for the period 1586 to 1627 A.D. The striking feature of this work is the graphic description of places like Shabud-Dinpur (Modern Shadipore) about 12 kilometers away from Srinagar in the North-west, Devsar, Tulmula, Hakarsar, and description of Kishtwar campaign.

The two fragments of this book is in the Research Library and S.P.S. Public Library Lal-Mandi, Srinagar.

### **Mukhtesar Tarikh Kashmir**

Its author is Pandit Birbal Kachur who is a Kashmiri learned Brahmin of Rainawari Srinagar. He began his work in 1835 when Sikhs were the masters of the valley. A study of this work reveals that Kashmiri Pandits were given high posts in preference to local Muslims with whom the Sikhs had developed prejudice and hatred. It gives us a descriptions of social customs and traditions of Kashmiri Pandit brethren. He gives narration from early times. He states that Kashmir replaced into a long period of tyranny and tribulation after enjoying peace under Mughal emperors.

### **Akbar Nama**

Its author is Abulfazal. He makes a brief and useful reference to Mirza Haider's rule in Kashmir. He describes in detail the invasion of Kashmir by Abdul Mali and Kara Bahadur. His chronology and topography are correct and his account is truthful. His another book *Ain-i-Akbari* is an important authority. It throws light on the social and economic life of the inhabitants of the valley.

### **The Waqi-at-Kashmir**

The author is Kh. Mohammad Azam Dadamari (D. 1179 A.H.=1765 A.D.) It was during his days when Prophet's Hair-relic was brought to Srinagar through the Old

Mughal route and he gives an eye witness account of its arrival. It is a short history of Kashmir in persian and based on political history, gives a brief and useful account of Muslim mystics and poets, saints and scholars who flourished in Kashmir during the Sultanate period. The manuscripts were lithographed and published by Noor Mohammad Publishers Srinagar under the guidance of the last persian chronicler of Kashmir Mufti Mohammad Shah Saadat resident of Nawahatta, Srinagar and who died in 1952 A.D.

#### **Gulzar-i-Kashmir by Dewan Kirparam**

Dewan Kirparam was the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in the days of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. This is a history of Kashmir in Persian—from the earliest times to 1857 and was compiled by the author at the instance of Mr. Robert Judicial Commissioner of the Punjab. It is mainly based on Raja Tarangini Tarikh-i-Malik Haider Chaddur. Tarikh-i-Narayan Koul Ajiz and Tarikh Birbal Kachur. It contains very interesting appendicies on products, arts and crafts and various trades of Kahsmir A copy is available in the S.P.S. Public Library Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

#### **Muntakhab-ul. Twariskh by Pandit Narayan Koul Ajiz**

It is short history of Kashmir from the earliest times undertaken by the author at the instance of Arif Khan the Mughal Governor of Kashmir in 1710-11 A.D. The author compared Malik Haider's florid and diffused translation with the Sanskrit originals collected by Arif Khan and prepared an abridgement in simple style.

#### **Tarikh-Rashidi by Mirza Haider Dughlat Kashghari**

It is famous history in persian of the Turks of Central Asia. Mirza Haider twice invaded Kashmir once from Kashgar in the part of 1533 and again from Lahore in 1540 when he conquered the valley and ruled for ten years. He describes his first invasion in detail but the second invasion and his administration in Kashmir is very brief. He gives a graphic picture of buildings, agriculture, religion and art and crafts of Kashmir as he found them.



**Asrar-ul-Abrar**

Its author is Baba Daud Mishkawti. It is one of the earliest Tazkiras in Persian based, according to the author, on original sources in Persian and Kashmiri. It notices especially the Reshi order of Muslim saints of Kashmir which owes its origin to Sheikh-ul-Alam, Sheikh Nur-ud-Din Wali Alamdar-i-Kashmir of Chrar Sharif. A study of order reveals an interesting fusion of Buddhist, Shaivist and Islamic mysticism in Kashmir. It has not been published as yet. Two copies of it exist in the Research Library (University Campus). Both are dated 1763 A.D. It was compiled in 1655 A.D.=1065 A.H.

**Fatuh-at-i-Kuberawis by Abdul Wahab Nuri (D. 1768 A.D.)**

This is a Tazkira in Persian of the Kuberawi order of Muslim mystics both Kashmir and Iranian and draws mostly upon "Asrar-ul-Abrar.

**Fatuh-at-i-Qadria**

In Persian by Mir Syed Muhammad Hussain Qadri Mantaqi (D. 1882 A.D.). It deals with the Qadriya order of Muslim mystics and notices Kashmiri, Indian and Iranian saints. It was compiled in 1282 A.H.=1867 A.D. It exists in the Research Library University Campus.

**Dastur-us-Salikeen**

Also known as "Sharh-i-Wirdul Murideen. It is written in Persian and its author is Sheikh Baba Daud Khaki (D. 1585 A.D.) is a commentary on his own panegyric in honour of his spiritual pir Mukhdun Sheikh Hamza. We get information of ancient saints and mystics and to the prevalent mystic practices.

**Khawariq-us-Salikeen**

Also known as "Tarikh-i-Hadi its author is Ahmad—Bin Assabur which was compiled in 1109 A.H.=1697 A.D. and is a Tazkira in Persian of Kashmir Muslim saints and mystics.

**Ranjit Nama**

Its author is Kanaya Lal. Volume III is entitled Asrar-ul-Akhyar or the Secrets of the Pious and gives an account of the Muslim saints and mystics of Kashmir.

**Gulab Nama**

By Dewan Kirparam, Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir in the days of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. It is the court history of Maharaja Gulab Singh 1846-56 A.D. the founder of the last Dogra dynasty of Jammu & Kashmir State. The book is after the model of Abul Fazal's Akbar Namah. It traces the origin and the history of the Dogra rules from the most ancient times and brings down the account to the close of Maharaja Gulab Singh's career. It is based on Raj Darshani a history of Jammu in Persian by Ganesh Dass but the author does not acknowledge it. The book has now been translated into English by Shri Sukh Dev Singh Charak of Jammu.

**Bagh-i-Suleiman**

Its author is Mir Saad Ullah of Shahbad Dooru of Kashmir and brings down the account to the reign of Juma Khan (1787 to 1793 A.D.). It gives an account of princes as well as of saints and mainly follows Waqiat-i-Kashmir by Muhammad Azam Dedamari. Two copies of it are available in the Research Library University Campus.

**Wajiz-ut-Twarikh**

Its author is Maulana Abd-un-Nabi It is short history of Kashmir in Persian up to the reign of Maharaj Ranbir Singh with a short account of Muslim saints. The manuscript is available in the Research Library University Campus.

**Tarikh-i-Moulvi Hidayat Ullah Mattoo**

It is an earlier supplement of Waqiat-i-Kashmir upto the reign of Jama Khan the Afgan Governor of Kashmir (1787 to 1793), the author died in 1761 A.D.

**Zaffer Nama; Malfusat-i-Timuri**

The author is Shaf-D-Din Ali Yazdi—it is the history of Timur and Khalil Sultan. Shafud-d-Din Yazdi was the historian of Timur and completed Zafer Nama by 1424-25 A.D. It throws light on Sikandar's relation with Timur when the latter invaded India. It gives a brief description of the geography and people of Kashmir. Similarly, in the Malfuzat-i-Timuri which is said to have been written by Timur himself,

there are references to his relations with Sultan Sikandar and to the topography of the valley.

### **Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri**

Its author is emperor Jahangir. It contains useful references to the history, habits and customs of the people of Kashmir.

### **Haft Iqlim**

Its author is Amin Ahmad Razi. It is a geographical encyclopaedia completed in 1594 A.D. It gives a brief account of Mirza Haidar's conquest of Kashmir, and makes short notices of some kashmiri poets, saints and rulers. There is also a reference to the shawl industry of the valley.

### **Majalisu's-Salatin**

Its author is Muhammad Sharif an-Najafi completed in 1628-29 is a brief history of India. It gives some account which is in detail the account of Rinchana's conversion to Islam.

### **Khulasatu's-Manaqib**

Its author is Nurud-Din Jafar Badakshi, and gives the account of the life of Sayyid Ali Hamadani. The author was his disciple. Prof. Mohibbul Hassan says there is only one copy which is available in Tübingen University library (Germany).

### **Tuhfatu'l Ahab**

It was written in the middle of the fifteenth century. It is a life of Mir Shamsu'd-Din who introduced the Nurbakhshiya teachings into Kashmir. The author's name is not known but his father was an important disciple of Shamsu'd-Din and he himself was a fanatical Nurbakhshiya.

The author of the book is probably a Shia Muslim. A copy of the MS is available in the Research library University campus obtained from Agha Sayyid Muhammad Yusuf, the Shia Muftahid of Kashmir, who is a descendant of Mir Shamsu'd-Din Iraqi.

### **Tazkiratu'l Arifin**

Its author is Maulana Ali Raina which was completed in 1587 is another biography of Shaikh Mamza Mukhdom



which is very useful for the study of the social and religious life of sixteenth century.

### **Waqia-i-Kashmir**

The author is Allama Ahmed the poet laureate of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin. The book is a persian translation of ancient history, Ratnakar Puran, which contained an account of thirty-five kings, whose names, according to Pt. Kalhan were 'lost' to history. Thirty-five kings have ruled over Kashmir five thousand years ago and also of seven kings who have ruled from the end of the second to the beginning of the six century. The period extended 300 years from 191 to 414 A.D. and 474-521 A.D.

### **Tazkira-i-Masha' ikh-i-Kashmir**

Its author is Baba Nasib-ud-Din Ghazi who is buried at Bijbhera. He relates the part played by Sheikh-ul-Alam, Sheikh-Nur-ud Din wali and his disciples in spreading and propagating Islam in the valley and gives interesting accounts of religious discussions between the Brahman priests and Muslim saints.

### **Nur-nama**

Its author is Baba Nasib-ud-Din Ghazi and was composed in 1630-31 A.D. Baba Nasib-ud-Din Ghazi was the first scholar who brought to light the achievements of Sheikh Nur-ud-Din Wali as saint and mystic.

### **Twarikh-i-Kashmir**

Its author is Maulvi Ghulam Hassan. He has written three volumes which deal with geography political history and the arts and crafts of Kashmir. The author belongs to village of Gamru in Bandipore tehsil in pargana-i-Khuihama. He was born in 1833 A.D. and was himself a good scholar of persian and Arabic and was interested in Muslim Mysticism and in literature. His ancestors had embraced Islam and had been awarded a Jagir by the Mughals in Mohalla Zunimar Srinagar. The family fell on bad days during the sikh rule and migrated to Gamru village. He himself says :

سکویہ بند کور جاگیر سونے  
لگوئی در کھو سیحامہ بارہ میونوی -

"When the Sikhs confiscated our Jagir, my father settled down in Khuihama".

The author travelled widely over the Punjab and part of Afghanistan and met some of the renowned personalities of his time.

During his life time the author was respected for his learning, winning manners, quickwit and liberal outlook, the qualities which stood him in good stead for the compilation of a complete history of his native land. The author was introduced to Sir W.R. Lawrence, land settlement commissioner, who selected him as his guide in ascertaining local conditions and assessing hardships from which the local peasantry suffered. He acknowledged the services of the author in his book, "The valley of Kashmir" in these words.

My knowledge of Kashur (Kashmiri Language) is chiefly limited to a colloquial acquaintance with terms in common use in village and agriculture what else I have learnt I owe to Pir Hassan Shah...Hassan seems to have taken great pains in writing his history which throughout maintains a high standard of historical sense but to please the rulers of the time, he has squarely held Muslims responsible for destruction of the temples and Tirthas without any research. He has mainly depended upon Mohd. Azam of Deddamari. His work can not be considered impartial. His works have been printed and published by the Research and publications Department of the State.

### Kashir

The author is Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Sufi, a former Registrar of the Delhi University, who began his work entitled Kashmir is 1925 and completed it in 1949 when it was brought out by the Punjab University Lahore. It is a history narrating the events from the earliest times to the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler, in brief.

### **Kashmir under Sultans**

Its author is Prof. Mohibbul Hassan former professor and head of the P.G. Department of History, Kashmir University Srinagar. He has restricted himself to the history of Independent Sultans of Kashmir. He has taken great pains in the preparation of the book. It is widely circulated and has impartial outlook together with methodological approach.

### **History of Kashmir**

Its author is P.N.K. Bamzai. He describes political social and cultural history of Kashmir from the earliest times to the present days. It seems that the author has taken his material from Hussan, Stien, Lawrence and Prof. Mohibbul Hassar. In the last chapters he has given bias to the Indo-Pak developments in Kashmir from 1947 onwards whereas he should have been impartial and is against the principle of national integrations. It is accompanied with a forward by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru.

### **A History of Muslim rule in Kashmir**

Its author is Dr. R.K. Parmoo at present director, History unit J & K State. It is a thesis approved by the University of Allahabad. Dr. Parmoo has worked for about twenty three years on this book. It is a fine piece of information from the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir upto the invasion of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab. Unfortunately the author looks at history from communal angle therefore his whole history is "from the point of view of a Kashmiri pandit".

### **Zainul-Ab-din**

Its author is Sh. N.K. Zutshi formerly lecturer P.G.D. of History, Kashmir University Srinagar, now Reader, Jammu University. It is a doctorate thesis which has been approved by the Lucknow University. Mr. Zutshi has made scathing attack on Sultan Skinder Shahmeri and his policy but has ignored his good works. Comments of those have been included whose knowledge on Kashmir is secondary.

### **History of Srinagar**

Dr. M. Ishaq is a young lecturer of History Deptt.



of Kashmir University. It is his thesis approved by the University of Kashmir. His treatment on Socio-Economic development is simple, lucid and impartial. It is the study in social cultural change of Srinagar of Dogra rulers, from 1846-1947. It is an addition to our stock of knowledge.

### **Tarikh-i-Kashmir**

Its author is Muhamad-ud-din Fauq, a Kashmiri settled in Lahore. He wrote extensively in Urdu on the geography, history and folk-lore of the valley. His history of Kashmir was published in 1910. In 1936 he published an exhaustive survey of the origin and history of various communities and well-known families of Kashmir—Aqwani Kashmir. He has followed Hassan and others whose views on history are not independent.

### **Sufism in Kashmir**

The author is Dr. A.Q. Rafeeqee. He is Reader and Acting Head in the History Deptt of Kashmir University. It is his thesis in the University at Australia. He has taken great pains in depicting rise and growth of Sufi Cult in Kashmir. It is a fruitful historical and research document and contribution to knowledge.

### **European Accounts**

The first European traveller who visited Kashmir was father Jerume Xavier, a portuguese. He paid a visit to the valley in 1597 A.D. along with emperor Akbar. He has left behind some accounts of the beauties of the valley of Kashmir. He has described in detail the difficulties of transport and communication. He has depicted the miseries suffered by Kashmiries as a result of the famine of 1596 A.D. when he says that they bartered away their children for food.

The second famous European traveller and visitor to Kashmir was a French citizen Dr. Francis Bernier. He accompanied Aurangzeb in 1663 A.D. His book on paradise of the Indies gives us information about Kashmir, its beauty, gardens and physical features of Kashmiris. After Dr. Bernier, another European traveller of note who visited Kashmir was jesuit priest, the Italian Hippolyte Desideri. He reached Srinagar in 1714 and was struck by the beauty of landscape

around him. He has left an account of the trade and handicraft products of Kashmir.

George Forester visited Kashmir in 1783 A.D. In his book "Journey from Bengal to St. Peter's burg" he tells us the state of affairs politically and economically during the pathan rule in Kashmir. This book is available in all the libraries of Srinagar.

From the begining of 1850 A.D. Russia advanced towards Afghanistan and central Asia and European Geographers and travellers began to penetrate in the valley and its Northern frontiers. Between 1819 A.D. and 1835 A.D. William Moorcraft, Vigne, Hugel Dr. Henderson and Victor Jacquemont were the well known visitors to Kashmir. With the exception of Dr. Henderson each of them has left detailed accounts of Kashmir. Its political and social conditions of people and the natural beauty and its strategic importance was brought to the notice of the European public. Hugel has described in masterly fashion his work in a book it is now translated into English (Kashmir-hind deskeice denseik).

Essay on Hindu History of Kashmir was written by Dr. Horad Wilson. It helps us to make a critical study of social and political background of Kashmir before Muslim era began. After Dr. Wilson, Col. D.J.F. Newell wrote a sketch of Muslim History of Kashmir. It is a mere a translation work from Mohd. Azam.

Next we come to Sir W. Lawrence 'The Valley of Kashmir' which is an encyclopaedia of Kashmir. It is the best available work which gives a general description of Kashmir's social and political conditions and people's faith and religion. Lawrence was a settlement Commissioner of Kashmir—(1889-95 A.D.). He has made extensive tour of the valley and has made a thorough study of the people in villages.

### **The Jammu & Kashmir Territories**

Its author is Fedric Drew. It deals with the detailed geography and physical features of the State, particularly of the Jammu region. It gives a vivid account of his journey in the frontier regions.

**Ladakh (Leh)**

The author is Alexander Cunningham, it a mine of information on the 'land of the Lamas.' It is an exhaustive survey of its geography, the ethnology of its people, their religion, social customs, history and economic set up. He was in the service of Maharaja of Kashmir.

**Sources in brief**

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**Archeological Proof :**

General Cunningham was the first Archeologist to take up the subject of Archeology in the State. The ancient gold silver, copper, and brass have been unearthed in the state and its use has helped us to build up our history under chronological order. Coins of this kind are housed in S.P.S. Museum Srinagar. Digging at burzamama village near Srinagar has revealed the standard of living in 3,000 B.C.

Survey of ancient ruins of temples and sites at Pamour, Martand, Vontpur, Pattan, Khanmuh, Naranagh, Buniyar pandraithan and Narastan (tral) give us the description and historical data of these places, and their architectural style with their foreign influence.

Most of the palaces, temples, Tirthas erected by the rulers were destroyed by the Hindu rulers themselves in course of civil wars and in foreign invasions and sometimes by Damaras when they were at war with their masters. Nothing has been left now except a few, wherefrom we are able to get scant information.

Mr. Rogers, Dr. Stein and Mr White Head have made considerable contribution to the knowledge of ancient history of Kashmir by the study of old coins. Dr. Stein has shown in his illuminating books "SerIndia" and "Ancient Khotan" the important role Kasmir to played as an advanced camp of Indian culture. We come to know how missionaries from Kashmir took the torch of propagation of Budhisim from Kashmir. Similarly during medeival period Muslim divines like Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani, Mir Shamas-ud-Din Iraqi and their desciples carried the banner of Islamic culture to the far flung areas of Baltistan, Ladakh and Tibet from Kashmir.

Most important source of Kashmir history is the study of a Kashmiri whose customs, traditions, manners language, folklore, dress, marriage ceremonies and food which has come down to him from his forefathers are worth to be studied which become interesting and instructive.

## Chapter III

# The Pre-Islamic Period

### (a) The earliest known kings of Kashmir.

I think it proper to give a brief account of early history of Kashmir when Hindus, Brahmans and non-Brahmans and Budhists etc. ruled the valley. We call it the pre-Islamic period of history of Kashmir. The real history of Kashmir begins probably from five thousand years before Christ. It is said that Sri Ram Chander of Ceylon fame was the first king who established a kingdom here but there is no authentic evidence in support of this fact. For about six thousand and thirty-three years tradition says, when the country became permanently inhabited it was split up into numerous little "Kutaraja" of kingdoms founded by the inhabitants of this place, which began in course of time to fight among themselves with the result that they called in a Rajput named Daya Karan from the Jammu territory to restore order and rule in the country. (The Gulab-nama); Daya Karan was the son of Puran Karan and grand son of Jambolochan, the founder of Jammu Town and of the Jamwal dynasty of Rajputs. Some historians connect him with the line of Rajas of Mathura. Daya Karan and thirty-five Rajas of his line are said to have ruled here. The latter part of the tradition, Dr. Stein says, has been added by a Kashmir Pandit to please the Dogra rulers of Kashmir, hailing from Jammu. (Introduction to the Raja-tarangini volume 1st).

### Gonanda I

Kalhana takes, his chronological calculation the traditional way—coronation of Yudhishtira the Pandava hero of the Epics. The date of this legendary event is accepted by him also for the accession of Gonada I, the first of the "lost kings of Kashmir," whose names were recovered by the chronicler from Nilmata Puran. Kalhana represents Gonada I as a contemporary of the Kauravas and Pandavas and is believed to be the first ruler from whose reign some semblance of a

chronological history of Kashmir begins, He maintains that Gonanda became king in 2448 B.C. Prof. Wilson places him on the throne in about 1400 B.C. Some suggest 1710 B.C. as the probable date of his accession while others are of opinion that he flourished about twenty years before the Mahabarta war. He went to war with Krishna on behalf of his relatives Jarashandha, King of Magadha and laid siege to the town of Mathura but was killed in the battle.

### **Damodara I.**

Gonanda was succeeded by his son, Damodara I. He was impelled by the desire to avenge his father's death attacked Krishna during Svayamvara celebrations held by the king of Gandhara, the corridor of India, a territory lying on the banks of Indus. Damodar was killed where upon Krishna gave the throne to his pregnant wife and when the child was born he was named Gonanda II. The Mahabharata war occurred soon after but as the king of Kashmir was yet an infant, his alliance was sought for neither by the Kurus nor by the Pandus.

## **THE PANDU DYNASTY**

### **A gap of 35 kings**

Hussan was able to trace the chronological 35 kings which were missing in Kalhana's chronicle and also of the kings who reigned before and after Ranaditya whose reign according to Kalhana extended over 300 years from 191 to 414 AD and 474 to 521 A.D. A list of these kings is given below to illustrate the importance of this rare contribution by our author Moulvi Ghulam Hussain of Gamru village (Bandipora Tehsil) who obtained the same information from Mulla Ahmad's translation (Persian) of the Raja Tarangni from Kashmiri emigrant at Rawalpindi. Kashmiris believe that kings belong to Pandava dynasty who once ruled Kashmir are of the 'lost kings'. The ruins of old temples are popularly called Pandav Lari or the buildings of Pandavas.

Popular legends about Kashmiri love lyrics of 'Himal-Nagirai' or "Bombar and Lolar" are connected with the stories of the lost kings. List of 35 kings whose name and



deeds have perished through the destruction of records is given as under :

S. No.	Name of the king.	Period.	S. No.	Nome of king	Time.
1.	Hiran Dev	30 years	17.	Sulkan Dev	28 yrs.
2.	Rama Dev	69 „	18.	Sena Dat	17
3.	Vyasa Dev	56 „	19.	Mangla Dat	39
4.	Drona Dev	58 „	20.	Kshemendra	66
5.	Simha Dev	54 „	21.	Bhemasen	61
6.	Gupla Chand	13 „	22.	Indrasen	46
7.	Vijayanand	25 „	23.	Sundersen	41
8.	Sukh Dev	44 „	24.	Gulgander	45
9.	Rama Nand	57 „	25.	Bula Dev	53
10.	Sandhiman	65 „	26.	Nalasen	25
11.	Maharan Dev	55 „	27.	Gokarna	30
12.	Kaman Dev	55 „	28.	Prahlad	11
13.	Chander Dev	52 „	29.	Bambur	8
14.	Anand	28 „	30.	Partap Sinha	36
15.	Drupad Dev.	51 „	31.	Sangramchand I	
16.	Hamam Dev	39 „	32.	Lark Chand	31
33.	Beram Chand	45 „			
34.	Vibhishana	17 „			
35.	Bhagavant	14 „			

List of six kings after the reign of Rana Ditya :

1.	Tujna	191-234 A.D.
2.	Sarbsena	234-282 „
3.	Gander Sena	282-319 „
4.	Lachman	319-352 „
5.	Suraks	352-403 „
6.	Vijraditya	403-414 „
7.	Ranaditya	414-474 „
8.	Vonaditya	474-521 „

Item No. 23 King Sundersen is believed to have built his capital Sandimat Nagar which was later on submerged under the waters of Wular. In his time people were wicked and there was a general decline in the standard of morals. There appeared a hermit named Nand Gupta a potter by profession, who exhorted the people not to indulge in wicked deeds full of sins

but nobody/would listen to him. He was ridiculed and teased. The hermit left them to their fate and left himself to the hill nearby still named as Karlsanger near the shrine of Baba-Shukur-Uddin-Watlab, (Sopore). Then one night a severe earth-quake shook the city and water gushed out of the earth. The city was submerged and all its inhabitants drowned. Simultaneously a portion of the hill came down and blocked the gorge at Khadanyar-Baramulla this caused a back-flow in the river turning the submerged city into a permanent lake.

Kalhana mentions the name of kings namely Lava (believed to have founded the city of Lolab), Kusha Khagendra, (he had his capital at present in Khag-Tehsil Berua). Surendra Gadhara, Suvarna, who had preceded Ashoka. These kings have found many towns and villages, whose traces are to be seen still in the valley, but their accurate history is not traced. Prof. Wilson says that they showed disregard and disrespect to the precepts of the Vedas, and they led impure and vicious lives. This was the reason that they were made to forget by our author Kalhan Pandit. Uptil now there is no authentic sanskrit text which tells us the account of Brahminical religion. It was an event which probably occurred at the subsequent period. The people of Kashmir were the worshippers of Nagas or snake Gods. Abul Fazl observes that "there were seven hundred places where I found carved figures of snakes, which the people worship" (Ain. i. Akbari ii, p. 148.)

Among the "lost kings" Kassalgham fixed his capital at Islamabad (Anantnag) and reigned for 19 years. He was succeeded by his son Maherkaz who reigned for 19 years. After the breakup of this dynasty we get the accounts of Surendra and his descendants Survarna, Sachinara followed him in regular descent and continued to build cities. The last of these princes being childless, the crown of Kashmir reverted to the family of former rules and devolved on Ashoka who was descended from the paternal great uncle of Khagindra. This history of all these princes is not known correctly. Abul Fazl says that the "prince Ashoka abolished the Brahmanical rites, and substituted those of Jaina." He was a pious worshipper of Shiva. Kalhana represents him as a local ruler, yet his description of the king as a follower of Jina i. e. Budha and builder of numerous stupas mark him out as the Maurya emperor of the

namesake. The fact receives corroboration from Hiuen Tsang who show Ashokan stupas in the valley. In the Mahavamsa, Kashmir is grouped with other outlying territories of the empire of Asoka.

Since he was a pious worshiper of Shiva, he dedicated a temple known as Vijayesa temple at Bijbihara and repaired it. He erected a fencing around these temples. He built Viharas and Stupas at Vitastatra (Vetshavotur in Vernagh Pargana); and Suskaletra (present Hukhletar in Berua pargana). He built the original town of Srinagar at a site of about four miles above the existing capital and which is now occupied by Military Contonment Badamibagh. It is called Puranadhis-thana (old capital) or Pandrethan. At a later stage he had broken through the fetter of Brahmanism and established friendly intercourse with Greece and Egypt, and it is to this connection that the introduction of stone architecture and sculpture is due. Budhism spread rapidly in the valley through his propogation. Budhism lingered on in the valley right upto the times of Kalhana, who was himself an admirer of Budha though he was a Shavaite. The pond in which the temple of pandrethan was erected has now been drained. The roof is fine piece of scupture. It was built by King Partha in 921 A.D.

From the accounts given above it appears that the early history of Kashmir and its chronology is not only defective but misleading. With respect to Ashoka Dr. Stein has described him in his translation of Raja Tarangni as being the follower of Buddha's religion who built stupas and viharas whereas Prof. Wilson believes that he was a follower of Shiva and an orthodox Braman. Ashoka was succeeded by his son Jalauka. Kalhana states him as the son of Ashoka. He was a popular hero and an ardent devotee of Shiva and used to worship daily at Bhutesha and Vijayeshwara Shrines, which he could perform through the journey or ponnies all along the route. At first he was an opponent of Buddhist but finally became friendly to them. He is unknown in the history of India. He may have been a native king of Kashmir. He may have come to the throne by a coup-de-tat. The first religious edifice on the isolated hill known as Shankara Charya or Takhti-i-Sulaiman was built by Jaloko about 200 B.C. The temple is supposed to have been rebuilt in the sixth century A.D. by king Gopadatyo. Jalokh



is said to have worshipped Shiva at Nandesa in consequence of having had read to him the Nandipurana by one of Vyasa's scholars. He also erected temples to the same deity as Jyeshta Rudra identified today as Jeethyar-Tirtha, where the Brahmins of the valley worship the diety even today.

The prince was possessed of supernatural powers and several marvellous stories are narrated of him. Since he was tolerant towards Budhists he bestowed on them some endowments as the Vihara called Krityasama which is identified today as Kitsum village below Baramulla. After a long glorious reign he went on a pilgrimage to Zeethyar Tirtha where after worshipping the diety the prince and his queen were both identified with that diety.

Jalak was independent king of Kashmir after his father's death. Saint Avadhuta "the vanquisher of Buddha" controversially was his religious preceptor.

Jalak is the hero of many traditions recorded by Kalhana. Once the king heard of the sanctity of the Sodara spring (Naran Nag) from the Nandipurana and thence forth used to worship at that spring. One day he was busy with his work, he forgot his daily observance and did not take his bath at Naran Nagh Spring when Lo: to his great surprise he found a spring breaking forth in a waterless spot at Srinagar (Zeethyar), which was alike to Sodara in colour, taste and other respect. Kalhana gives useful information concerning the administration of the country. It appears that up to the time of Jalok, government consisted of seven main state officials or ministers the judge, the Revenue Superintendent, the Treasurer, the Commander of the Army, the Envoy, the Purohita and the Astrologer. Jalek increased the number of offices to the eighteen and by this act inaugurated the system of constitution of Yudhishtira meaning thereby the eighteen Karamistanas (Departments) mentioned in Mahabharata and Ramayana. These were the Councillor, the Purohita. Heir Apparant, Generalissimo, Chamberlain, Steward of the Royal Honse-hold, Superintendent of prisons, Treasurer, Auditor of the Treasury, Officer with Judieial Functions, Perfect of the City, Engineer of Works, Lord Chief Justice, President of the Assembly, Warden of Criminal Jurisdiction, Warden of Fortifications, Warden of Marches, and Conservator of Forests. This system

continued till the time of Lalitaditya who added a few more functionaries which shall be discussed later on.

The king passed away after the glorious reign of sixty years when he went to the pilgrimage of Siramochana. Jaloka was succeeded by Damodara II. He was a decendent of Ashoka or 'belonged to some other family.' He was a supporter of Shaivism. He founded his capital on the present Damodhar Udar which is the site of Srinagar Airport. In order to raise water to his town he erected a dam which is an extant village Godasoth in Tehsil Badgam. The water would be supplied to palace and the plateau for drinking and irrigation purpose. He constructed several stone bridges and causeways, the remains of which are visible in modern times.

One day he was going to the river Jhelum to have his bath and to perform his customary ablutions. He was importuned for food by some hungry Brahmins, he deferred complying with their solicitations till he had bathed in the genuine river. The king replied "I cannot feed you before bathing. Go away (sarpata) sharp", To shorten the interval they proposed to bring the river to him and immediately the water of the Vitasta bubbled up from different places near them, forming springs that are still to be seen. The king was unmoved by this miracle and being still determined to bathe in the genuine stream, the Brahmins denounced a curse upon him and transformed him into a snake in which shape he haunts the ground near the capital and is often to be seen roaming in that form amidst the dark solitudes of the plateau. The curse could not be taken back. "When you will hear the whole Ramayana/ Bhagvat recited in a single day, the effect of the curse will cease". People of the locality believe that the legend is current that the king was formed into a snake. In the midst of plateau there is a raised site known as Satrasteng where the king's palace was located. And a spring at the adjoining village Lalgam is the place where the king performed his ablutions. Damodhara was succeeded by three kings of the race of Turushka and they were followed by a Bodisattva who wrested the empire from them by the aid of Sakya Sangha and introduced the religion of Buddha into Kashmir. He reigned a hundred years and was followed by Abhimanyu. The princes were called Hurshika, Tushaka and Kanishka. Hurshika had his capital at



Haviskpur which is present Uskar village in the east of Braramulla. Jushkaha d his city at Jushkapur which is present day's Zukar in the north of Srinagar. Kanishka had his capital at Kanshakpur on Srinagar Baramulla Highway. They were of Trushka race i. e. Turk or Tartar. An important consequence of their sovereignty is said to have been the almost entire change of the national faith, and the nearly exclusive prevalence of the doctrines of the Buddhists under a Bodhisattya or hierarch named Nagaarjuna. Under his (Kanishka) patronage the fourth Buddhist Council was held in Khandalvan Vihar near Harvan in Kashmir under the presidency of Nagarjuna as some say and drew up the Northern Canon or "Greater Vehicle of the Law." The great Bodhisattva, Nagarjuna, lived in his time at Harvan, as is believed. Nagarjuna was Buddhist alchemist of great fame. He was born in the land of Vidarbha (Berar) as a son of a wealthy Brahman who had remained childless for many years. He became the head of the whole Buddhist church. Many authorities agree that Nagarjuna flourished in the first century of Christian era. He is one of the celebrated teachers elevated to Bodhisattvaship and is the alleged founder of the Mahayana system which he also introduced in Tibet. He is represented as a great poet, philosopher, physician and a writer of great ability. Heun Tsiang on his visit to the valley found still the memory of that ruler fully alive in that kingdom. The popularity and power enjoyed by Buddhism in Kashmir, under the rulership of the Turushka king is historically correct. The most important event as already mentioned was the convening of fourth Buddhist Council in Kanashka's time, which met near the capital of Kashmir but the scholars do not agree that it was held near Srinagar and is yet a controversial affair. However Heun Tsang visited Kashmir. He gives a graphic picture of the council which he collected from the study of records which were extant at that time. Heun Tsang stayed at Jaivihdera Vihara near present Jamia Masjid Srinagar. Paramarth gives an account of the council. He says that the king acted in consultation with Parsva issued summons to all the learned scholars, 500 Arhats assembled. They held discussion as to the place of meeting and finally Kashmir was selected and the king built a residential monastery for the Brethren to reside and



hold their meetings in. The council met and there was signal victory for the Mahayanists. Other celebrated scholars including Asvagosh, and Vasumitra took part in the deliberations. The Council sat for six months made great efforts to bring into order the scattered sayings, theories and dictums of various doctors of the law.

The commentaries were written in the Sanskrit language and were inscribed on copper plates. The words are 5.2 millions and are yet buried under the earth. Efforts are being made to unearth the findings. At present no trace has yet been found of them. They perhaps still lie somewhere near about the old city of Srinagar and wait to be unearthed by some future lucky archaeologist,

This council is a landmark in the history of Buddhism which gave an official and a superior status to the Mahayanist Doctrine which may rightly be said to have been born and developed in Kashmir.

Kanishka conquered Kashghar, Yaqand and Khuntan then dependencies of China.

It is probable that Vasishka and Havishka who were the sons of Kanishka, acted in succession as viceroys but it appears that Vasishka predeceased his father who was succeeded in his whole empire by Huvishka in 123 A. C.

#### **Vasudeva or Jushka 140 A.C.**

He was succeeded by Vasudeva, also called Jushka who died in about 178 A. C. when Kushana rule came to an end in Kashmir. Their dynasty however lasted in Kabul and the Punjab till they were swept away by the Hun invasion in the 5th century A. D.

These princes were great patrons of Buddhism and are said to have built many mathas caityas and other similar structures almost all of which seem to have perished. Hiuen Tsang confirms Kalhana that Kashmir under the Kusana went Buddhist. The description of the dynasty as Turuska receives corroboration from Alberuni.

What happened in Kashmir after the fall of great Kusanas is not known for certain. Probably the valley was ruled by local rulers of Kusana affiliation. Numismatic evidence tends to show that parts of the valley during this

period, came under Kidara-Kusanas. Kalhana, however pushes a series of local rulers, who according to him followed the great Turuskas.

Buddhism suffered a reverse after the reign of Kanishka and his successors. According to 'Kalhana Buddhists had gained a great preponderance under the benevolent guidance of Nagarjun who was responsible for the destruction of the customs and rites of Kashmir. This evoked great anger of the Nagas, deities of the valley who brought excessive snowfall and famine which destroyed Bauddhas (Buddhism) in the Valley, which had become the "plague of the Bhikshus." The three Tartar princes were succeeded by Abhimanyu, a monarch evidently of Brahmin appellation and a follower of orthodox faith that is rites and rituals as prescribed in the Nilamatpurana. The king is believed to have founded a town named Abhimanyapur (modern Bemyun near Srinagar) where the king erected a temple dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva, which had a crest of silver on its top. The chief instrument in this reform was Chandr Dev a Brahmin celebrated as the author of a grammar, and a teacher of the Mahabhashya. The Buddhist perished in the "storms of rain and snow", according to Kalhana they had adopted the Buddhist heresy. It is believed that Chandr Dev descended from Kasyapa addressed his prayers to Maheswara as Nila Naga, the tutelary deity of the Valley and obtained from him termination of what our author calls a "double plague of Kashmir" or predominance of Buddhists. The traditional Brahmanic learning was revived in the reign of this king. Says Kalhana "At the time there manifested itself some miraculous power through which the Brahmans who offered oblations and sacrifices, escaped destruction, while the Bauddhas perished". The traditional religion of the land as prescribed in the Nilamatapurana was established.

### **Gonanda III :**

Abhimanyu I was followed by Gonanda III the founder of Gonanda dynasty. The drive against the Buddhist continued during the reign of Gonanda III who brought back the traditional worship of the earlier cult. Gonanda III ruled for 35 years. He was followed by four kings Vibhisana I Indrajit,

Ravana and Vibhisana which remind one of the demon warriors of the Ramayana. These kings are said to have founded many towns and temples in the Valley. The last one was succeeded by king Nara who built a town after his name, near about modern Bijbhara on a karaewa near present Semthan village on Srinagar Anantnag Highway. Nara was a good just king. His city was known as Kimnarapora and was a synonym for paradise. A great shrine named Vishnu was built in the city where pilgrims from far off places would come and worship. The city was burnt down during the civil wars of later Hindu rulers.

During his reign, there was mass migration of Aryans in the sub-continent of India, a branch of the same also entered and settled in the Valley and absorbed the original inhabitants. Nara was succeeded by his son Siddha. Then came many kings after him namely Utpalaksha, Hirnyaksha, Hiranyakula and Vasukula, who ruled in succession from father to son. The king mentioned by Kalhana is Mihrakula. He is undoubtedly the celebrated Huna monarch of the same name who ruled over a large part of north India after the fall of the Gupta empire. His occupation of the valley of Kashmir is corroborated by the evidence of Hiuen Tsang. The Mandasor inscription of Yasodharman tends to show that the capital of this Huna monarch was in the Himalayan region, which is believed at Sakala (Sialkot in Pakistan). He was a persecutor of the peaceful Buddhists and a merciless destroyer and plunderer of their stupas and monasteries. Kalhana represents him as a cruel king whose approach became known by the sight of vultures, crows and the like eager to feed on those being massacred by his encircling army. Two instances of this monarch's ferocious disposition are recorded by Abdul Fazl and the other Muslim authors; on the return of Mihirakula to his own kingdom (Kashmir). While crossing Pir Panchal Pass, an elephant fell while proceeding along a narrow defile and was crushed to pieces by the fall; the cries of the dying animal were music to the ears of the king, and so delighted was he with the sound, that he ordered 100 elephants to be precipitated in a similar manner, that his entertainment might be protracted; according to Abdul Fazal was thence called Hasti Wuttar; Hasti signifying



an elephant and Wuttar meaning injury; the latter part of which etymology is scarcely of Sanskrit origin; besides which, that author is a little at variance with himself. The place is still called Hastivanj in the Pir Panchal mountains on old Moghul route. His coins have been preserved in S.P. S. Museum Srinagar, which tells us he had leaning towards the Shiva cult. He is credited with building a shrine of Shiva near Srinagar, and founding town in Holada (Vular Pargana) calling it after his own name Mihirapur. It is believed that he brought about five thousand Brahmins from Gandhara, and settled them in the valley. Out of these were settled at Vijayeshwara (modern Bijbhara) about one thousand Brahmins and bestowed one thousand Agraharas or land grants to the Brahmins. He favoured Brahmins and hated Buddhism. According to Mohammed Azim he also constructed in the Paragana of Ouder the Chandrakul canal, which existed in the writer's time. He committed suicide about the middle of the fifth century, overpowered probably by the sense of his own misdeeds.

After Mihirakula's death, it is likely that he was followed by other Hun rulers. Though the Rajatarangini does not specifically mention it, some of the names recorded in it disclose their Hun identity. Their peculiar names and the fact that most of them were ardent Saivas, show that they continued the patronage of Brahmins and succeeded to a great extent in reducing the power and influence of the Buddhists. The duration of his reign is said to have been 70 years. After Mibrakula the Vaka succeeded to the throne of Kashmir. He founded shiva temple at Vakesa and built a canal. Vaka reigned for 63 years and 13 days. The names and reigns of his immediate successors are all that has been recorded of them :—Kshitinanda ruled 30 years Vasunanda 52 years and 2 month; Bara 60 years; and Aksha 60 years. All the information obtained about them is that Vasunanda composed a treatise on erotics, and Aksha founded the town of Akshvala, the modern Achabal where at the foot of the famous spring lies the beautiful garden laid out by Jahangir, in the district of Anantnag (Islamabad). The water in the spring oozes out from the mountains which comes out of the stream, flows from the village Devalgam, on Achabal Korarnag road.

Ashaka was succeeded by his son Gopaditya, a prince of eminent piety, whose virtue brought back the satya Yuga (or golden age) he enforced strict observance of the ritual and distinction of caste removed those Brahmans who had adopted impure practices from their endowments, and invited others from distant countries to replace them and finally he forbade the killing of any animal except for the purpose of sacrifice. According to Muslim authorities he built the temple now called Shankarachrya in Srinagar. The old name survives in the villages of Gopkar situated at the foot of the hill. The ancient temple of Shankarachrya dates from this period and formed part of the original temple of Jyeshtheshwara. Most probably the late Maharaja Hari Singh built his residential palace on the site of Gopaditya's palace. Shankarachrya hill was formerly known as Copadari Hill. To Muslim writers it is Takht Suliman. He donated land to Brahmans from Aryadesha near its vicinity. "Aryadesha means Indo-Gangetic plain where from the Brahmans migrated to Kashmir". Gopaditya was succeeded after 60 years of reign by his son Gokarna, of whom it is stated that he erected a temple of Gokarneshwara which is the locality of Gangeswara. After Gokarna Narendraditya succeeded to the throne who reigned for 31 years. He calls himself Deva Sahi Khiggila on his coins. He built several temples such as Buteshwara and Ugresa in the valley. After his death Yudhisthira surnamed the blind ascended the throne. He was hated by his subjects and took refuge in the Punjab and after some time he returned to Srinagar and tried to regain the throne but was defeated and captured and thrown in a prison at Durgaglika present Drugjan at the western foot of Sankarachrya hill in Srinagar. He died in prison fort at Drugjan, (modern Rustumgardi hill)

After Yudhisthira was dethroned, the nobles of Kashmir invited from India a kinsman of the King Vikramaditya; named Pratapaditya I, who ruled the people affectionately as any son of soil would. He was succeeded after 32 years reign by his son Tunjina who with his Queen Vakpushta erected the temple of Tungeswara, and founded the city of Haravasantika. They were patrons of learning and fine arts. Kalhana gives a graphic account of the terrible famine which took heavy toll of life in



his time. In reign of this king unreasonable fall of snow in the month of Bhadra (August) destroyed the crops and caused a famine, in which great members of people perished; such was the general distress that all the ties of society were "dissolved and all the duties of life disregarded, modesty and pride, family honour and public respect were all forgotten; the love of parent and child, of husband and wife, no longer prevailed every individual sought alone for self-preservation, and although reduced to bones and tendons the famished skeletons fought with fury for the carcasses of the dead.

The king exerted himself to relieve the distresses of his subjects, and exhausted his own treasures, as well as those of his ministers, in procuring supplies of grain; the jewels of court and queen were appropriated to the same purpose but the famine still continuing the monarch, despairing of relieving his afflicted people and unable to witness their sufferings determined to put a period to his existence by committing his body to the flames; from this purpose he was dissuaded by his queen.

Vakpusta is believed to have founded the town of Katimusa which is modern Kaimuh on Anantnag Kulgam road and which is present Romu village on Srinagar Pakharpur road via Kakpur. She performed Sati on the death of her husband. The cremation, place was known till Kalhana's time as Vakpustatavi which is probably Vokai village Kulgam. He ruled for 37 years. The queen created charitable endowment where she distributed food to the multitudes of indigent people even at the present day records the chronicler. A prince of another family ascended the throne, his name was Vijaya who is believed to have founded the town of Vijayeshwara which is modern Bijbehara and rebuilt the famous shrine of Vijayeshwar. After his death he was succeeded by Jayendra. This prince was fortunate at first as a minister of great integrity and talent named Sandhimati or Sandhimat who was influenced by his advice. After his death Sandhimati is believed to have ascended the throne under the title of Aryaraja. He was a saintly king who built shrines and whose memory was living upto Kalhana's time. He was an active promoter of the worship of Shiva as the linga, with the usual accompaniments of the trident and bull. Many temples of this description continued for a long



and birds. Matrigupta abdicated the throne of Kashmir and departed to Benaras where he passed rest of his life in religious duties. He reigned four years and nine months.

Paravarasena II ascended the throne of Kashmir. He was active and enterprising prince; he invaded the kingdom of the south and turned his arms against the son and successor of Bikramaditya whom he drove from his capital. After his return to the Kashmir Capital he determined to found a city which should be the capital of his kingdom and he accordingly constructed the city of Srinagar, then known as Parvarpur on the banks of (Vitasta) Jhelum, over which are eleven bridges. eleven under construction. He embellished it with many palaces and temples. The whole city was dotted with temples of Mahadev, Durga, Kali and Bairovahas. He also built a wooden bridge across the Jhelum river. This bridge was built near the present Bana-mohalla locality Srinagar. The city had undergone many vicissitudes since the period of its foundation. He reigned for 63 years and it is said that he ascended to heaven bodily while he was worshipping in his temple at Pravaresha. He was succeeded by Yodhishter II from his queen Ratnaprabha, He had his ministers. Jaya and Sikandagupta, the latter erected temples and Vihars in the valley, one of the Vihars was Skandabhavan which is now Khandabhavan in the Tarabal locality sixth bridge (Srinagar). It is now the graveyard of Pir Mohd. Basur. Yodhishter was succeeded by Naranderditya who is believed to have built the temple of Narendra Swamin which is located in Banamohalla locality Srinagar and is usually called Narashwari Shrine, temple of Maheshwar at Hari Parvat and the temple of Harthishwar by his wife at Wontabhawan Srinagar. He established the system of maintaining the records. He was succeeded after his death by King Ranaditya who ruled for 40 years. Kalhana gives a few references to his shrines and Tirthas which he built in the valley. One of the shrine was Raneshwar which is believed by the Pandits of Srinagar, the present graveyard of Syed Mohammad Al-Madni at Zadibal Srinagar, and Ranasamin dedicated to Lord Shiva which is believed the present Hazi Pir Mohd. Sahib, Srinagar which has now been erased from the map of Srinagar. A new mosque is built at this place. After Rnaditya's death Vikramaditya his son succeeded him. He

time and one of the temples was called Sahasralingam from its containing a thousand Lingas, constructed of stone, the remains of which were visible in the time of Kalhana Pandit. (1148 A.D.).

Aryaraj abdicated in favour of Meghavahana who was invited to the throne of his ancestors. Nobles of Kashmir sent a deputation to Meghavahan to come and assume the sovereignty.

Meghavahana although a worshipper of the orthodox divinities, was inclined to adopt the Buddhist doctrine; he encouraged the "professors of that heresy" to settle in his dominions, and particularly prohibited the destruction of animal life, granting from the public revenue a maintenance to such individuals as followed the business of hunters or butchers whom his enactments deprived of their accustomed means of support. Meghavahana founded the town of Meghavana and also the vihara or monastery of Meghanatha. His queen Amritaprabha built a monastery named Amritabhavan, which is present Vantabhavan five miles from Srinagar on the Grandarbal road near Sheri Kashmir Medical Institute Srinagar for the accomodation of foreign Bhikshus and pilgrims.

Ou-Kong the Chinese pilgrim and traveller stayed in this Vihara. Her father also built a stupa known as Lostupa. Several more stupas and viharas were also built by other queens. Khada built a Vihara at Khadayar near Baramulla. Meghavahan's son and successor of Sresthasena also called Pravarsena succeeded his father. He is believed to have built a temple of Pravaresa which was located some where near the Ziarat of Bha-ud-Din Sahib near Hari Parvat, Srinagar. He is believed to have built many temples in the valley. He was succeeded by his elder son Hiranya under the guidance of Toramana. After some time he threw Toramana into prison. Hiranya had no son and at his death the throne fell vacant. Matrigupta was asked to ascend the throne. The reign of this Brahman was of limited duration; the death of his protector exposed him to the disaffection of his chief subjects and to the arms of the lawful heir Pravarasena who with a small but resolute band of friends was approaching Kashmir. Matrigupta proved a successful ruler and just, liberal minded, pious and tender-hearted. He also prohibited the slaughter of animals,



and birds. Matrigupta abdicated the throne of Kashmir and departed to Benaras where he passed rest of his life in religious duties. He reigned four years and nine months.

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built the temple of Vikram Ishwar at Vicharang 3 miles to the North of Srinagar where the Pandits of Srinagar worship even today. He is believed to have built the temple of Bamti-ishwar at Ratsun Tral. He also built an embankment. He was succeeded by Baladitya who was a prince of warlike character and erected his pillars of victory on the shores of eastern sea (Bay of Bengal). After his death a descendent of Karkot Nagar and protege of the monarch succeeded in obtaining the throne of Kashmir, who was formerly feeder for horses and now married to Baladitya's daughter Angleikha.

## Chapter IV

# Ruling Dynasties

### The Imperial Karkota Dynaty (627 A.D. to 948 A.D.)

#### Origin

The word Karkota as an appellative indicates different plants; it also occurs as the name of a presumably un-Aryan Tribe, There is probably some connection between the Naga Name 'Karkota' and the word Carkota which in the Atharava Veda is used to indicate some kind of poisonous snake. In the list of principal Nagas found in the epic literature, the Nagaraja Karkota (ka) takes an honourable place. He is the procreator of this royal house. In the kingdom of Nepal Karkota takes a prominent position in popular worship and legend, and is considered to be foremost among the Nagas of Nepal.

The great importance of the Nagas both in Budhist and in Brahmanical lore, is reflected in plastic and pictorial art. Among the frescoes of the Ajanta there are several representations of Nagar.

Regarding the origin and significance of Naga worship there prevails a very marked diversity of opinion. According to Fergusson, the Nagas were not originally serpents but serpent worshippers and aboriginal race of the Turanian stock inhabiting Northern India, who were conquered by Aryans, Dr. Oldham is of the opinion that the Nagas claimed descent from the sun and had the hooded serpent for a totem. Takshacila (Taxila) he says, was the chief city of the Naga people. And Takshaka was one of their chiefs. (I believe that the same deity is worshipped by the Brahmins of the valley at Zewan Village, S inagar).

The Naga somehow or other is mixed with the cult of Shaivism. Shiva is imagined to have depended for his ornaments on the Nagas (serpent). And it is claimed that South Indian Shaivism migrated to Northern India, leaving in the south its remnants in the Nagras or Nayar.

**DURLOBHAVARDHNA**

( 627-663 A. D.)

Durlobhavardhana is also called Dirleyir - Dirwun by Abul Fazl, is believed to have been really the offspring of the Naga Karkota. He sat on the throne being the son-in-law of Baladitya who was of humble origin stated to have been the son of Naga. His family was given ophiolatory or serpent worship which has been the prevailing religion of Kashmir from time immemorial. He was the founder of the Naga or Karkota dynasty.

With the accession and establishment of Karkota dynasty, the history of Kashmir becomes factual and authentic. It is no longer legendary. From now onwards important rulers and events are mentioned on coins and in the accounts of foreign travellers.

Durlobhavardhana reigned from 627 to 663 A. D. The visit of the china pilgrim and traveller occurred during the time of this king, who accorded a warm reception to the pilgrim at Drangbal-Baramulla and engaged 20 men for the clerical job and five men to wait for the traveller. Hiuen Tsang the pilgrim resided in the valley as the honoured guest for fully two years, for study of sutras and sastras. He invited him to a grand feast at the palace. The two full years represent longer halt than any which the pious traveller allowed himself during his sixteen years wanderings through the whole of India and Central Asia. The records of this great Chinese pilgrim contain by far the fullest and most accurate description of Kashmir. The close study reveals that the king was tolerant towards Budhists and built Viharas in the city for Budhists. Budhist faith was prevalent in the valley. Peace and prosperity prevailed and the king was inclined towards Budhist faith. Brahminical faith had revived and the king had built temples of Brahminical denomination. This is corroborated by the Raja Tarangni which mentioned "the building of temples by the queen, and the prince as also grants by the king, of villages to Brahmans in the Southern districts of the valley".

According to Heiun Tsang the brethren of both the vehicles lived together in peace. Though king was inclined towards Budhism that religion was not in a very flourishing



condition. It was on its last legs. Yet there were above a hundred monasteries, five thousand Buddhist priests and four Ashokan topes built over the relics of Budha. The people are handsome in appearance but they are given to cunning. They love learning and are well instructed.

Kashmir is the most famous land in the history of the spread and development of Buddhism. In the literature of this religion we find frequent reference to the country generally in terms of praise and admiration.

The country was prosperous and peaceful. The political power of Kashmir extended to all the adjacent territories of the west and south including Rajapuri (Rajuri), Parnotsa (Punch), Bhimbar, Uraca (Hazara) Taxila (Takshasila) and Simhapura, which seems to have included the Salt Range.

Durlabhavardhan was a great builder of temples and palaces in the valley. His wife built a monastery named Anagabhavan for the use of Buddhists.

Dal-lake, says Hasan was upto now a vast meadow called vitlaninerg and was converted into a big lake by the king on account of flood waters which occurred in the southern parts of Srinagar due to incessant rains, and a big embankment was constructed from the present Nawpora upto the river Jhelum. He was just and noble king.

At this time the Chinese empire under the Tang rulers (Tai-Tsung) was expanding in the west. She had conquered Kucha, Khotan, Khorasan and Khashgar and had become a dominant power in the North. She had reduced the kingdom of Taxila and salt range (Simhapur) and the principalities around Kashmir. Kashmir was now always exposed to the Chinese invasion. In the west Arabs had become a militation and advancing towards the west of Kashmir, Durlabhavardhana is mentioned in Chinese annals as Tu-lo-pa who controlled the route from China to Kipin (Kashmir) via Korakaram. A number of coins with rude execution of headless king. written over them have been unearthed and belong to him.

Durlabhavardhan maintained his reputation of coolheadedness and prudence after he became the king. His wife was princess Anglekha daughter of Baladitya as already mentioned. Her husband was of low birth as an official in charge of horsefodder and therefore the princess had disapproved this

marriage. She was upset and always brooding over her gloomy future. She declined to do anything with Durlabhavardhan and formed illegitimate intimacy with some persons who had access to the palace and held high position at the court. The princess lost all sense of shame. Among those was minister Khankha. Poor Durlabhavardhan came to know about it and one midnight he found his wife fast asleep in her lover's chamber. He could have murdered them both but he calmed down his anger and controlled his impulses. He took up his pen and wrote a couplet on the lovers scarf which purported to say. "Remember that you have not been slain though you deserve to be killed". This warning greatly changed his wife's mind as well as the lover's. Their heads were put in shame and over-whelmed by the king's nobility, forbearance and broad-mindedness, this proved a turning point in their lives. This made Angalakha famous in history. She became a dutiful wife and living like one who was begotten by a great king. Her transformation was complete. His long rule of 36 years was marked by peace and un-interrupted advance of the people in making his regime a success the charming Ananglekha contributed big share. A queen-consort she proved worthy of her father. Kalhana pandit is reluctant to forgive women any lapse in the maintenance of high standard of sexual chastity has some good words for her. He says that Anglakhas's dignity was matched by her good looks. It was through the joint efforts of the royal couple that the foundations were laid of the Karkota dynasty which gave to Kashmir some of the best rulers including Lalitaditya Mikhtapid.

In the reign of Durlabhavardhan the valley suffered from heavy inundation when its embankments were destroyed and valley presented the spectacle of the vast lake. Thousands of houses fell and millions of inmates were either drowned or rendered homeless. It was the king assisted by his devoted wife to rehabilitate the roofless and the bereaved when others were overwhelmed by the catastrophe. She loved to serve the servants and scholars irrespective of the consideration whether they happened to be Buddhists or votaries of the Brahminical faith.

The king consecrated at Srinagar Darlabka-swamin temple, which has not been identified so far.

After Durlabhvardhan's death his son Partapditya II called by Abul fazl is also known as King Durlabhaka (635-685 A. D.) ascended the throne. His coins bear the legend Sri Pratap which is available in the Srinagar Museum.

His chief minister was Hanumat. In the Kram-rajyya (Kamraz) in Kruhuin pargana 18 miles from Srinagar and four miles below pattan—he built a grand city of Partappur converted by local pronunciation into Tapar, according to Muslim historians. This city rivalled the city of Indra. The king established his capital here, and endowed it with many temples and palaces. The city was discovered by the State Archeological department in September 1942. A temple was discovered which was dedicated to Vishnu. From the perusal of fragments of the Sanskrit inscription found engraved in the Sharda script on some stones built perhaps in the cornice course of the gateway, it is certain that the construction is somehow connected with a certain Brahmin, son of Ghagga, and the architect's name is Lakhshman.

Durlabhaka or Partapdutt—is said to have been brought from abroad by discontented ministers of Kashmir. He ruled for fifty years. This was the time for Chinese aggression—towards the west Hunza, Yasin, Gilgit, Chitral, Turkistan (Tikharistan) and western Tibet. Polu-(Bultistan) were conquered and annexed to the 'celestial empire'. Kalhana relates Pratapdutt's romantic episode of his marriage with Nirandharapraba, previously wife of a merchant named Nona who was living in Kashmir. Nirandharapraba bore the king three sons Vijradatiya, Chandrapeda, Tarapeda Muktapeda. After she became queen she spent her wealth on the construction of a huge structure dedicated to Lord Shiva which was called Sri Narenderaeshvara. After his death he was succeeded by Chandarped or Chandaranund called by Abul Fazal. His eldest son and successor who was a prince of exemplary mildness and equity. He punished his own officers for encroaching on the tenements of a chamar or worker in leather in preparing the site of a temple which he wished to erect, and which design he was prepared to abandon if the consent of the leather-worker could not be obtained. A liberal reward and his personal solicitation obtained the acquiescence of the Chamar. His ground was duly made over



to the king and the temple was completed. We have another legend of his equity and discrimination respecting the means employed by him to detect the murderer of a Brahman, but it need not be repeated as the story has been told by Abul fazl.

He is to be identified in the Chinese Annals as Tochen-to-la-pipi and ruled over Kashmir for about 10 years. He seems to have come into conflict with the Arabs in the West to wage war against whom he sent an envoy to the emperor of China in A.D. 713 The Chinese emperor conferred investiture of kingship, and thus Chinese Paramountcy was established over Kashmir, and the ruler of Kashmir became his feudatory and in return he received military aid from China. At this time Chinese army had overrun Gilgit, Chitral, Yasin and had crossed in to Baltistan (Po-lu) It is apparent that Kashmir became a subordinate ally and assisted China in her enterprises in the Himalayan regions. It is at this time that Arabs reached upto the frontiers of the Valley and penetrated in the Valley most probably as traders while Arabs had for the first time had set foot in the Valley during his father's time. It was Hamim, a Syrian Muslim who was the first Muslim to enter and settle at Srinagar, along with his co-religionists.

Chandrapida (Chandranund) was renowned for his piety and justice. He built a grand Vishnu shrine Tribhavan Swamin for his worship which is near about Ziarat Thaga Baba Sahib, watal Kadal (7th Bridge) Srinagar. His wife Prakash Devi built Prakash Vihara for Budhists. Chandrapida enjoyed the short reign of no more than eight years and eight months and was succeeded by his brother Tarapida (Taranand) as mentioned by Abul fazal a violent and oppressive sovereign and an enemy of the priesthood; his reign was "fortunately a limited" one, and extended to no more than four years and a few days. His oppressive laws made the people flee from the cities and towns and took refuge in forests and hills. They were put in to abject conditions and the king brought them in the cities and put them to the sword. Most of the hill states of Kashmir kingdom were snatched away from him. He built a grand temple named as Tarapid Tirtha on the vacant site of present Jamia Masjid Srinagar. Here once stood a grand Budhist Vihara known as Jayandra Vihara. The

chinese pilgrim Huen Tsang stayed and received instructions in various Sasiras and Sutras. Here a Budha statue was also erected which was destroyed along with the image by King Ksema gupta (950-958 A.D. and erected a shiva temple here. Its forty two villages were confiscated by him. Taranand's wife Narendra Prabha built a grand stone temple Narendra Ishvra at Tapper at a huge cost.

## LALITADITYA—MUKTAPIDA

(724-760 A.D.)

Lalitaditya is better known as Lultadut by Abul Fazl, was the youngest son of Partapditya and Tarapida's successor. He is chiefly known as a great conqueror, and his rule is counted as the glorious period in the annals of Kashmir. He is the hero of the vast conquests and led many expeditions, for he was essentially a tireless warrior also. Kalhana shows him to be the universal monarch moving round the earth like sun. In the Annals of the Tang dynasty (Chinese history) he is called Muktapida under the name of Mu-To-pi as the king of Kashmir, who sent an embassy to the Chinese court during reign of Hiuen-Tsung (A.D. 713-755). His grand father was a man of humble origin. His mother was a mistress of a merchant settled in Srinagar. "The dynasty", says Young Husband "was foreign and it is impossible therefore to say how much foreign blood Lalitaditya had in his viens but his family had at any rate been settled in Kashmir for a couple of generations. Historians call him as a great conqueror and mix up much fable with fact But what certainly is true is that he asserted his authority over the hilly tracts of Northern Punjab and he attacked and reduced the king of Knoj to submission and that he conquered Tibet", Badakshan in central Asia and sent embassy to Peking and accepted suzerenity of China. At this time Arabs were threatening his kingdom in the Kabul Valley and they were also inimical to the Chinese. The Chinese Annals mention that U-li-to the ambassador of Mo-to-pi (Muktapida) the king of Kashmir came to the Chinese court to seek aid from the emperor against the common enemy Tibet and Arabs. U-li-to requested an alliance between the Chinese Emperor and Lalitaditya

against the Tibetans and despatch of a Chinese auxiliary force which was to encamp in the midst of his country (Kashmir) on the shores of Mahapadma lake (the Wular) in Khsinama pargana. The Kashmiri king blocked all the five routes to Tibet. The Kashmirian envoy mentioned also the great success his king had achieved against the Tibetans in all his previous campaigns. Kashmir generally depended on the Chinese help to fight the Tibetans and Arabs.

The military exploits of Lalitaditya have naturally received greater prominence in the various accounts of his reign and have made him a hero to the Kashmiris of later periods. But his great works of architecture and public good and his intense love of learning, patronage of scholars and his great virtues as a humane conqueror are some of the qualities which should have, independent of his conquests, ranked him among the greatest kings of Kashmir. He was tolerant towards all schools of religious thought. People followed three faiths side by side. The king hence built temples of Vishnu and Shiva and Buddhist viharas as well as Stupas. He showed zeal for Buddhism by erecting the ever Rajvihara with a large quaviandle a large chaitya and large image of Budha. His son-in-law also built a Vihara. Tantric Buddhism seem to have develop in this period as Cankuna his minister is credited as Tantaric Buddhist. He also built two Viharas one of which have a golden image of Budha. Its details have been mentioned in the previous chapter. Lalitaditya ushered in an era of national glory, prosperity and peace in the country.

During his reign public services were re-organised. New buildings were constructed. Irrigational facilities were afforded to the cultivators and relief measures were adopted in times of unforeseen calamity. Charitable institutions, where the poor and the needy were fed every day, were also set up. Many towns were founded during the reign of Lalitaditya. He built the Laltapur modern Latipur on Srinagar Anantnag Highway and Lokabhavan in Islambad (Anantnag) tehsil on old Verinag road. Roads were founded by him. Extensive drainage works were also carried out under his orders and vast areas were reclaimed and made fit for cultivation. At Hushkapur (Ushkar) near Baramulla he erected an image of



Mukta Swami, and one of Nrihari in the Stri Rajya. In the Bhumi Grama he built the temple of Jyeshta Rudra, and over and along the Jhelum he built boat bridges and stone ghats. Prihasapura was his favourite work; already mentioned in this city he built a palace of unhewn stone and a variety of royal and religious edifices; he raised a column of one stone, 24 cubits long, and bearing on the top an image of Garuda; he placed in the temples images of top metal; one of Vishnu as Parihasa Kesava which was made of pure silver weighing 1000 Tolas and another colossal figure of Buddha was constructed of 1000 Prasthas of brass; a figure of Hari with flowing hair, was set up of gold, and another golden image was made by him of the same deity in the Varaha Avatar. His example was imitated by his queens, by tributary princes, and by his ministers one of whom a second Jina named Chankuna, a native of Bokhara, erected a Vihar. The foundation of Parrispur nine miles away from Srinagar in the west and its embellishment by this king are recorded by the choriclars like Mohd. Azam and Narayan Kaul that the fragments of this pillar of Garuda were visible in their times. The Statue of Sugata also remained standing for a long time.

Lalitaditya, although the substantial proof of his devotion left no doubt of his piety was yet not free from faults. Amongst other defects he was addicted to wine and in one of his drunken fits he foolishly offered the city of Srinagar (Pravarapura) founded by Pravarasena to be burnt, that it might no longer emulate the splendour of his own capital. (Parihaspur). His orders were not executed when prevailed upon by his wise ministers. Of his constructions Dr Stein says that it is no longer possible to trace with certainty the cities and remains of all the towns and structures which owed their existence to Lalitaditya. But those among them which can be identified justify by their extant ruins the great fame which Lalitditya enjoyed as a builder. The ruins of the splendid temple of Martand which the king had constructed near the Tirtha of the same name are still the most striking object of ancient architecture in the valley. Even in their imposing dimensions and by the beauty of their architectural specimens of the world, Martand occupies very high place. It is not only typical of Kashmir architecture at its best but is "built on the most

sublime site occupied by any building in the world; finer far than site of the Parthenon, or of the Taj, or of St. Peters, or of the Escorial—we may take it as the representative or rather the culmination of all the rest and by it we must judge the Kashmir people at their best.” The temple of Martand set the mode for Kashmiri Art in the subsequent centuries. Therefore, Lalitaditya is the founder of Kashmiri ancient art. The ruins of the city of Parihaspur were identified for the first time by Dr. Stein in 1892 A.D. Kalhana describes series of great temples by the king at that time.

After the reign of Lalitaditya Parihaspur passed through many vicissitudes which explains the utter decay of the ruins therein. His son Vajraditya removed the royal residence from there and later the drainage operations of Suyya brought the confluence of the Jhelum and Nullah Sindh from Parihaspur to Shandipur which naturally affected the importance of the town. Sankarvarman (833-901) used the materials of Parihaspura for building his new town at Pattan and Harsa (1089-1101) seized and minted some of the gold and silver images of the temples still existing therein. In the subsequent civil wars the whole town was burned down. Its material was carried away for the construction of Jhelum Valley Road during the last decades of 19th century during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, third Dogra ruler, and which was put to stop by the intervention of British Resident of Kashmir Mr. Talbot.

Before the reign of Lalitaditya the Valley had often been subjected to constant floods due to the silting up of the bed of Jhelum river from Sopore to Baramulla and Lalitaditya was the first king to realize that by cleaning the bed of rock and silt the flow of water would be quickened and thus the level would fall in other parts of the Valley. He was thus the forerunner of the great engineer of Avantiverman Suyyaverman. Lalitaditya got the passage cleaned and the threats of the floods receded. He also built numerous irrigation canals. He erected water wheels for lifting water to the Cakradara and other Karewas for irrigation purposes. The cumulative effect of these works was that the productions of crops increased adding greatly to the well-being and prosperity of the people. Muktapada raised the number of court offices from 18—under Jalauka to 23, the five new offices being those of High Cham-

berlain, Minister of foreign affairs, Master of the Horse, Keeper of the treasury and chief executive officer.

When engaged in his last expedition Lalitaditya sent out instructions on the art of governance. He warned his subjects (Kashmiri's) against the internal dissension and against neglecting the forts in respect of repair and provisions. Dw-ellers in mountains, he said, should be occasionally punished to prevent these becoming strong and troublesome. Every care should be taken that there should not be left with the villagers more food supply than required for one year's consumption, nor more oxen than were wanted, for the tillage of their fields. Because, if they should keep more wealth they would become in a single year very formidable. Damaras or fuedal lords are strong enough to neglect the commands of the King. The cultivators style of living must be lower than that of the city people. Offices should not be held by family cliques and troops should not be raised from a single district.

### **Damaras**

Damaras means the well to do banded gentry of fuedal barons, R.S.Pandit adds, the barons or the rustic aristocracy of Kashmir were not equal to the Rajputs in the social scale, yet Kalhan Pandit mentions instances of inter-marriage between them and the Damras and the ruling family of Kashmir. Any one could become a Damara who apparently began as a prosperous cultivator. He could wax strong in course of time as a powerful fuedel baron capable of being, "a thorn in the side of the King". We often find the term Damara in the Rajatarangni and the persons who are designated play a prominent part in the latter portions of Kalhan's narrative. He also uses the term Lavanya too who figure prominently. Harshdev tried to supress Damara but failed. Today in our Kashmir Dars and Lone's claim decent from Damras and Lavanya's who are now Muslims in their faith.

Lalitaditya patronised at his court a famous dancer Indra Prabha. He was a lover of music and art and this was a golden era in the history of Kashmir. Arts and literature flourished and poetry blossomed forth giving new impetus to indigenious talent.

The victories of Lalitaditya were celebrated not only



during the time of Lalitaditya but even long afterwards Kalhana mentions that in his time the victories were annually celebrated and Alberuni mentions that the Kashmiris observed the second of Caitra as a day of Lalitaditya's victory over the Tibetans.

Kalhana mentions two legends about his death which were current in his own time. Both of them agree in connecting it with distant expeditions to northern region. According to one version Lalitaditya perished through excessive snow in a country called Aryanaka which cannot exactly be located. Probably it is modern Afghanistan. Another version made him end his life by suicide in order to escape being captured when separated from his army and blocked on a difficult mountain route.

The glorious design of Lalitaditya served as a beacon light folly of yielding to the impulses of passion; his meditations extended farther, and convincing him of the futility of human power, and the shortness of human existence, he determined to exchange his kingly throne for the cell of an ascetic." Having adopted this determination he withdrew to the mountains. Dripatha leaving after a short reign of little more than a year, the crown passed to his brother Vijraditya (Bijradut—Abul Fazal). He was also known as Bappiyaka who was born of Cakramardika another queen of Lalitaditya. The king was cruel and of abandoned character. He was a debauchee: he passed his days in the company of a large number of women of his harem. He drained Parihaspora of its valuables and money for this purpose. Here Raja Tarangni mentions again the existence of Muslims in Srinagar who are called as Mlechhas, a big class for the second time. Vijraditya sold many brahmans to them and got huge money. We also infer from this reference that Muslims were already settled and were free to practise their own form of worship according to Islamic tenets.

*Note* Here the contention that Islamic practices in the valley started from the arrival of Syed Bulbul Shah is incorrect. It had already begun in the later part of 7th Century and the Muslims were called Malechas being foreigners. Morcopolo the venetian traveller also testifies to this when he says that

Brahmans of the valley had employed Melechas as butchers and servants.

The Chachnama or Tariki-i-Hind wa-Sind and History of India as told by its own historians edited by H.M. Elliot and Prof. John Dowson Volume 1st, are enough proof for the existence of Muslims in the Valley.

Fortunately his reign was of short duration and lasting only for 7 years and was succeeded by his elder son Prithiviyapida by the queen Manjarika succeeded his father both in the throne and in the 'habits of life'. He was also called Pertooanund by Abdul Fazl. After four years he was dethroned and succeeded by Sangramapida (Sungranaund—Abdul Fazl) He was a son of Mamma, one of Vijraditaya's concubines; apparantly this prince reigned seven years and was succeeded by his younger brother—Jayapida (Jeyanund)—Abdul Fazl. It is likely that the Kashmirian power suffered at this stage reverses at the hands of Arabs. Baladhuri says that at this time Abbasid Caliph-al-Mansur was the Governor of Sindh and his commander-in-Chief Hisham Ibn Amar-al-Taghlibi conquered Kashmir for him—and took many prisoners and slaves as captives. Most probably by Kashmir is meant northern parts of the Punjab and not the valley which was under the possession of Karkotas.

#### **Jayapeed or Vinayaditya (Jayanand—Abdul Fazl)**

Jayapeed was known as Vinayaditya who came to the throne of Kashmir in 751 A.D. and ruled upto 782 A.D. On his accession to the throne. He removed his capital a few miles above Parihaspur and called it Jayapur which is now identified as Village Anderkoot near modern Sumbal, (Sonawari Tehsil), about 12 miles away from Srinagar. He built this town (capital) on an Island rising from the then Sumbal lake. There is no trace of this old grand city except a few hamlets—and ruins of a temple. Jayapeed built temples and Vihars in the city and a great Matha was also built by his queen. Here he also built a grand fort of Jayapura in which construction he was assisted by artists sent by Vibhishana, the Rakshasa monarch of Lanka, whilst Achu son-in-law of Pramoda king of Mathora and Jayadatta one of the king's principal ministers contributed to its embellishment; the one

by a temple of Siva and the other by Brahmincal colleges, besides Jayapeeda built Malhanpur near Srinagar which is identified as Malur on the left Bank of Jehlum below Srinagar. His wife built the town of Kalyanpur which is a men village known as Kalampur near Shopian. Jayapeeda was a good and just ruler and tried to imitate his grandfather Lalataditya Mukhtapeeda in glory and conquest. Kalhan Pandit devotes his reign almost as a great hero of popular legend. Soon after his accession the king was stimulated by the ambition of rivalling his grandfather's fame set out for the conquest of the world. 60,000 litters are supposed to have been counted with his army as it passed through the frontier watch station of Kashmir. He subjugated all the kingdoms of Northern India upto Allahabad (Prayaga) where he is reported to have given 10,000 horses to the preists, enjoining upon them to put his seal on the parts of the Gange's water taken by the pilgrims from there to their homes. This he vainly believed would threaten the rulers of other kings who would automatically become his vassals.

He then left his army under the charge of his Minister Devasarman and went to the expedition of Bengal where he married the daughter of prince Jayanta. He and Jayanta led an army to the neighbouring territories—and brought them under his sword.

On his return Jayapeeda defeated the king of Kanauj Vajrayudha in the way and on reaching Kashmir he found that during his absence of three years his minister Jajja had annexed the throne. After returning from his successful expeditions, Jayapida met Jajja near Hukalatra in the modern Tehsil Beru known as Hukalatra in the valley, wherein a fierce battle Jajja was slain. after ruling the valley for three years. Jayapeeda's coins bear the legend Sri-ja-pratapa which depict that he used his grand-fathers prevailing coin-type after he had defeated the King of Kanauj or that he accompanied Lalitaditya's expedition and as a viceroy of his grandfathers conquered provinces struck the initial of his name on the coin. But in his home province Jayapeeda stuck a different type of coin with 'ja' on the obverse.

Jayapeeda was a great patron of art and literature. His court was adorned and thronged with a galaxy of poets and



Scholars and learned men from far of countries. One of his chief councilers was Damodaragupta who was a famous poet. He wrote Kuttanimatta kavya a treatise on erotics and contemporary life. The court poet Bhattaud-Bhata wrote on aesthetics and the King paid one lakh Dinars daily. Other poets and men of letters who adorned his court are Manoratha, Sankhadutta, Chataka and Khir-Swamin (both a poet and a grammarian) King Jayapida was himself a poet. His other Minister was Vamana one of the two authors of Kashikavrtti, the famous country on Panin's grammar. Khirswamin wrote a notable commentary on Bhatupatha or the study of verbs. Also in his very reign another Kashmiri scholar Kavutta wrote Mahabhasya-pradipa which is a guide to Mahabhashya. It is on the evidence of I-tsing, a Chinese scholar who visited Kashmir in the 7th century A.D. that Jayaditta and Vamana Kashmiri scholars wrote commentary in his time. Jagdhar Bhat wrote grammar. Lokhuta expounded the Rasa school. His theory that Rasa belonged to former only, but Sankura, his contemporary asserted that it was related to spectator as well.

Some say that it was during his time a second Chinese pilgrim OU Kang (Wu Kung) or Dharam Dhatu had paid visit to the valley in 759 A.D. and followed the foot steps of Huen Tsang through Gandhara route.

He was warmly received at Ushkar (Baramulla) where he stayed for some days and then reached Srinagar where he was lodged in Amrita prabha Vihara which is now Vontabhawan, locality of Srinagar. These Vihars he mentions as Ngomi-to-wan Vihars which was in a flourishing condition. He stayed for four years in the valley, occupying his time from daybreak to nightfall set in studying Sanskrit and visiting places of pilgrimages in the valley. He resided longest at Ushkar (Baramulla). It appears according to Stien that his account was "trustworthy and accurate". Buddhism had increased since Huen Tsang time and in the interval between the two, Buddhist Monasteries had trebled in number and other monuments had increased in the kingdom of Kashmir. It is interesting to find Oukang referring to the routes by which Kashmir maintained contact with the outside world. He says that Kashmir was enclosed by tall mountains which served as

ramparts—The routes are the same as those which were in use then. One is in the east route or Tibet another in the north to Polu, or Baltistan or a third in the west to Gandhars. Here we have a testimony to the antiquities of the Zojila route to Ladakh and beyond to the Gilgit road via Burzal pass which also leads to Baltistan over the Deosai plateau and Jhelum Valley road from Baramulla. Oukang also mentions another route which was kept closed unless used by the royal army. He gives no indication of where this road is to be found, but it is probable that it refers to route over the pirpanchal. These routes were secured by gates. For many years after this Kashmir and India attracted Chinese pilgrims anxious to learn more of Buddhism of first hand and it is probable that many of them visited and stayed in Kashmir on the their way. No record exists however, of their visits and with Huen Tsang and Oukang the contribution of Chinese travellers to our knowledge of earlier Kashmir closes. The political relation between China and the Kingdom of Kashmir, seem to have ceased soon after the time of Oukong. This was Probably due to the Chinese power under the later Tang rulers gradually losing ground in central Asia before the Arabs and Tibetans.

Some Historians say that the visit of Oukong occurred during Jayapeeda's ancestors reign and he saw nothing but chaos and anarchy. He has left memorable account of Kashmir and its people. They say that there was no settled monarchy. The legitimate successors were either butchered or thrown alive into pits.

We are informed by Kalhan Pandit that towards the end of his reign Jayapeeda set out once more for the conquest of the world. This time he led an expedition against the King of eastern region. Bema Sen the king of the eastern region imprisoned him but managed to escape. He is beleived to have attacked the king of Nepal, Aramudi. At a private conference with the king of Nepal. Deva Sarma represented to him that the treasures of Jayapeeda were with the army, but their amount and distribution were known to Jayapeeda alone; that it would be advisable therefore for him to have an interview with prince, and learn from him under some plausible pretence, these particulars, as otherwise the money might be lost or embezzled, and Aramudi be disappointed of a valuable prize.

The Nepalese was deceived. Orders were given for Deva Sarma to be admitted privately to Jayapida, and the minister thus found himself in his master's presence. This whole episode is a legend. His expeditions effected the economy of the State. It is believed that he prayed to the great lord of Wular lake (Mahapadma) who directed him in a dream of a copper mine in the neighbourhood for running the administration.

"The mine was accordingly wrought and in the course of his reign the king coined 100 crores of Dinars less one, challenging all prices of the world to exceed this coinage, and complete the 100-crore."

On his return from abroad Jayapida subjected the people to heavy fiscal exactions. To accumulate treasure he levied on all ranks of people, and particularly oppressed Brahmans, by resuming the endowments, which he or his predecessors had bestowed upon them. On the pretext of supervision Jayapida plundered sixty four temples in the Valley through his officials. Their complaints and remonstrances were unavailing with the king and his ministers, Siva Dasa and others, a set of Kayasthas (officials) incapable of any generous feelings whose extortion drove a hundred brahmans of Tulmul Tirtha to drown themselves in the river. Kanhana mentions that most of the Brahmans had sought death by voluntary starvation. Jayapida himself became a victim to a divine vengeance as he met with an accidental fall. A wound ensued in one of his legs, and this breeding a number of worms, which preyed upon the king's body, he died in the greatest agony, after a reign of thirty-one years. Jayapida was succeeded by his son Lalitapida, who was born to his wife Durga Devi. He was a dissolute prince, who lavished his father's ill-gotten treasures on parasites and prostitutes, and instead of pandits and heroes, made buffoons and cetamites his companions. He modified his father's persecution of Brahmans by restoring them the aghararas (land grant) and endowed numerous aghararas at several places in the valley. He died after a reign of twelve years of the grossest debauchery. He was succeeded by Sangrampida his brother by another mother the princess Kalyan Devi. He is also known by the name of Prithivypida.



Sangramanand (Prithivyapida) ruled for seven years. The next monarch of Kashmir was Chippatajaya, a son of Lalitapida by a prostitute named Jaya Devi otherwise Kalyapali, the daughter of a Kalyapala or distiller, of Acha village. The brothers of this women had been brought to court by the king, and their nephew being yet a minor they took the government into their own hands. They were five in number named Padma. He founded Pompur (Padmapur) where he built the temple of Vishnu Padmashvamin near the present Jamia Masjid Pompur. Padma's wife Gunadevi built a matha in Srinagar and a second temple at Vijayeshwara (Vijbroar). Utpala, he built Utpalpur which is indentified as Kakpur. He built the temple of Vishnu Utpal Swamin here. Kalyana he founded the temple of Kalyan Swamin not identified so far. Mamma offered about 85000 cows with 5000/ dinars in outfit on the occasion of consecration of the temple. He is believed to have built the temple of Mamma Swamin. They exercised the royal power-de-facto. After nominal rule of twelve years, Chippata was killed by his uncles. His follower Ajitapida was a puppet at the hands of Utpala. His reign was marked by the discord and mutual jealousy of Padma and his brothers. The hostility between the regents ultimately led to a fierce battle between Mamma and Utpala, which concluded in the latter's defeat and the overthrow of Ajitapida. These usurpers continued for period of thirty-six years to possess throne of Kashmir. They ruled with viloence and injustice and distributed liberally the public treasures and built splendid temples and rich endowments. But the brothers did not continue on friendly terms. As already mentioned Mamma defeated Utpala on the banks of Jhelum. Yasovarman, the son of Mamma proceeded to dethrone and kill the king, and placed Anangapida son of Sangramapida on the throne. Utpala's son Sukhavarman raised a successful rebellion and crowned his own nominee Utpalapida a son of Ajitapida, but Sukhavarman was killed by a relative. The throne was ultimately secured for his family when the powerful minister Suraverman deposed the reigning monarch and placed Anantivarman his son on the throne. Utpalapida was accordinly deposed and the son of Sucha Varman the founder of the Utpala dynasty succeeded.

## VERMNAN DYNASTY

According to the Abul Fazl the change of dynasty occurred and new dynasty was known as Varma which means the Vau and Dal. Varma is an adjunct expressing a Kshatriya or military descent. The present possessor seems to have assumed it as the founder of the family, Utpala and his brothers were apparently of a less respectable origin.

Politically as well as economically, Kashmir suffered a great loss during the regime of Jayapida's weak successors. Not only were the distant territories conquered by the prowess of Lalitaditya lost, but the adjoining hill tracts took full advantage of the weakness of the later Karkot rulers, threw off the sovereignty of Kashmir. Kashmir had lost most of the conquered provinces and her suzerainty had come to be confined to the Jhelum Valley, west of Baramulla (Khadanyar). The economic ruin was hastened by the luxurious habits of some of the kings as well as by their weakness which gave the ministers and officers of the State a free hand in plunder, and loot. Kalhana says that the riches accumulated by Jayapida were plundered in toto by his son and his successors. "They carried off the revenue of the country, feasted in mutual jealousy on the masterless kingdom". The valley was overtaken by disastrous floods resulting in famines so much so that a Kharwar (Khari) of rice was sold for 1050 dinaras. There was political instability in the State for about 75 years which naturally affected trade and commerce. Jayapida's weak successors did not issue any coin which means their was over financial condition during this period. There was much reduction in wealth and population during this period (later Karkotas) but on the whole this period was the most glorious and remarkable in the history of Kashmir. Under early Karkot rule she became a strong and aggressive power, and carried on a policy of aggrandisement in all directions. Never before the Karkota period the rulers of the valley had performed such a great feat, nor was she able to repeat it in future but what led to their sudden eminence? Where from could she obtain the money for expeditions? It is quite clear that the

resources of Kashmir were scanty. it was China which supplied the necessary resources and gave military aid to the rulers of Karkot dynasty and dictated foreign policy of Kashmir. According to the Chinese annals of the Tang dynasty between the years 627-649 A.D. Durlabhavardhana was in control of route from China to Kashmir. It is clear that Karkot king was as a vassal of the rulers of China in the later period, of Tang rulers, it was Chinese who controlled routes from China to Central Asia mainly because Arabs were advancing towards the chinese empire, and it was but essential that china should have control over the foreign affairs of Kashmir too which continued for about more than hundred years extending from 650-750 A.D. according to the Chinese testimony. There was long drawn struggle between Turks, Tibetans, Arabs and Chinese for the possession of Central Asia, and Tokharistan (Badakhshan) It is therefore clear that Kashmir, as subordinate ally helped China in her wars in that region. Chandrapida fought against Arabs in the interest of China. When China came into conflict with Tibet, Lalitaditya had to block all the routes to this kingdom. We can infer that, Lalitaditya had the main objective in view to protect and assist in the establishment of Chinese supermacy in these regions.

Some historians have challenged the authenticity of the Chineses sources. "But the Chinese have more accurate chronology and are precise.

### **AVANTI-VARMAN**

(855-883 A.D.)

We have noted that the history of Kashmir after the death of Jayapida was a record of installation and deposition of puppet kings and of the jealousies and intrigues of rival faction at the kings court. Before the accession of Avanti Verman (Aduntderma-Abul Fazl.) on the throne of Kashmir the Damaras, powerful fuedal barons of Kashmir had become very powerful and aggressive, they had ammassed huge fortunes and wealth by high handed methods or forcible usurpation of lands granted to the temples and for their protection they created armed retainers and acted as Rajas in



their small kingdoms. and did not care for the authority of the king. To bring them under his control, king Avanti Verman attended to this urgent task first and annihilated them in toto.

One of the loveable persons in the history of Kashmir was Avanti Verman who had risen from a particularly low origin to a position of all powerful Monarch. He possessed the vigour of a self made man who had graduated in the hard school of adversity. He was a rare combination; says a local Chronicler, "of strength and gentleness and the first and most conscientious servant of the State". But when he ascended the throne the powerful cousins also had revolted and were not deposed to submit. He had to thrash them out. He had to bring to book the "rapacious administration" Kayasthas (Clerks)." Avanti Verman's wise rule of 28 years gave the long suffering people the necessary time to recover from their prolonged nightmare." To curb these rowdy elements in the State, it was essential to the stability of his own rule and the peace of his subjects. The credit goes to his wise minister Suraverman, who overcame all opposition.

From this reign of Avanti Verman our Rajatarangni becomes reliable historical document. Kingdoms of the south of Pir panchal range had thrown off its allegiance to the Kashmir throne and small independent principalities had sprung up at other places. The kingdom of Kashmir was restricted to its natural boundaries extending only four marches below Baramulla. (garhi Dopattan).

Avanti Verman was one of the noble and greatest monarch in Kashmir. It was during his reign that Valley achieved un-precedented material prosperity and progress. To this day his reign is remembered by Kashmiris as heavenly blessed when the necessities of life were available. He banished poverty and scarcity from the Valley. His reign is called the golden age by ancient chroniclers and writers. He took big projects in hand to irrigate barren areas and reclaimed marshy lands.

Having restored order and tranquility, the king nominated Sura Varma his brother by a different mother, Yuvaraja, and the two brothers were both distinguished for their liberal and public spirit. The king gave large presents to the Brahmans

on the occasion of coronation and the Yuvaraja bestowed upon them Agraharas, Khaduya and Hastikarna which is identified as modern Vaghama village near Bijbehara town. Here he constructed a temple and statue of Gokula. His example was followed by his younger brothers and the ministers of two princes. And built variety of towns, temple and images and embellished these in the whole Valley. Among these we may specify the following which have been given to us in the long list by Kalahana which are still extant. The memory of the king is preserved in the village of Avantipore (Woonotpur which lies at a distance of 24 KM from Srinagar. Avanti Verman was a staunch Vaishnava. He built two temples at this place (Avantipur). The temples have been described in detail by R.C. Kak ex-Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. According to him these monuments are among the most imposing monuments of ancient Kashmiri architecture and sufficiently testify to the resources of the builder. One temple was dedicated to Vishnu before his ascension to the throne and after obtaining sovereignty he constructed the temple of Shiva Avanteshvra. The King had abandoned the capital of his grandfather Jayapida who had built Jayapore modern Anderkot near Sumbal village, and settled and built his new capital at this place on the slopes of Vastarvan hill. It extended from present Avantipore to Barsu near Latapore. Here he dedicated numerous temples and it became the seat of propagation of Vishnu cult. He also dedicated a temple to a God (Mahadeva). In this city killing of animals was strictly prohibited. The markets of the city were well decorated.

He built temples at the shrine of Tripureshvar (modern Ishbror) near Nishat Bagh, and Bhutesha at Naranagh village Wangat (Tehsil grandarbal) and Vijayeshwar (modern Bijbhara) and had pedestals with silver conduits. His Prime Minister's (Sura Verman) wife Kavyadevi constructed a temple dedicated to Sadashiva at Sureshwari and named it Kavyadevishvara. His Prime Minister also built a Matha and named it Suramatha on the banks of Dal lake. His Prime Minister was a man of learning and piety. He was guided in his duties by a verse in Sanskrit meaning. "This is the time to do good, while fortune, fickle by nature, is present. How can there

be again time for doing good since misfortune is always imminent."

His minister (Sura Verman) was founder of many cities, and founded the city of Surapur, which is now Hurpur seven miles from Shopian in the South West locating there the watch station (Drangha) in the Pir Panchal Pass now known as old Moghal route. Here he built a grand temple and dedicated it to lord Shiva. This city was known as Diamond city. The architecture of this city was purely Brahmanical, which rose to its greatest heights under this ruler. The king had friendly relations with his Prime Minister and respect for his learning and loyalty. Kalhana once gives an account of an incident which occurred at Bhuteshevar in the district of Iar (Gandarbal Tehsil). It gives us an account of the powerful position which the prime minister had, with the king. And introduces to us representation which the king received at site. Once Avanti Verman went to worship at Bhutesha and noticed on the base of the God's image some utpala shaka (A vegetable grown in forests) called by us as Upal Hak which the priest presented to the king, for offering to the God. The king enquired the reason for such a poor offering and the priest of the temple informed him that one feudal Baron named Damar Dhanva had taken away the villages which belonged to the shrine and hence they could afford to make no offering than this to God. The King was displeased and did not worship at the shrine, feigning illness. The minister came to know of this sudden anger of the king and at once summoned him in the court in his presence and killed him there and then. The king's anger was subsided and when the minister enquired after his health (Kings), he said, "I was well," and resumed his worship at the shrine.

The economic recovery was the next item of the king's programme. From a remote time and particularly during the weak rule of the later Karkotas, floods and famines had frequently visited the valley, and submerging it from time to time whole villages in the upper reaches. The dearth was so excessive that many perished, amongst whom were Kallatta Bhatta and other eminent men. Mukhtapida (Lalitaditya) had tried his experiments with great exertion and drained some water from the marshy and submerged lands. He was



successful to some extent and the Zamindars were able to produce good crops. After his death drainage operations had been neglected and due to civil strife and turmoil that Valley had to face before the coming of Avanti Verman, the devastation and destruction due to floods had increased so much so that the price of Kharwar of Shalli had gone to 200 dinars. The people were in abject circumstances and the king was greatly grieved and thought of several plans for the relief of the people. This was the great task before the king to fight the great monster that is "famine". We are informed by Kalahana at this time a man named Suyya Verman appeared on the scene, his origin or his birth is not known, which is regarded as mysterious. He was found exposed in an earthen vessel by a Chandali, sweepress by whom he was suckled and brought up. Hearing the causes of the irregular swelling of the river discussed, expressed his conviction that he could apply a remedy, and his words having been reported to the king he was brought before Avanti Varman. The mode he proposed to adopt, he declined explaining, and he was looked upon by the ministers as an idiot or a cheat. The king notwithstanding determined to give him a trial, and allowed him at his request to take from the treasury several bags of Dinars. Suyya Verman took the money in pots and hired boats proceeded towards Madavarajya (Maraz) in Nandi Illaqa on the Vishov river (Kulgam Tehsil). This area was submerged with flood water. Suyya Verman threw a pot in water where the land was under water. The villagers tempted by the hope of obtaining the money, combined to effect its recovery. The area was desilted and the water began to flow out, and in this way the whole area was reclaimed for cultivation. Then after sometime he proceeded to Baramulla Gorge, (Khandanyar) village and threw handful of money into the river. The famine stricken people jumped into the river and in order to find precious coins cleared the bed of the rocks which had rolled down from the hill side, and thus had created obstruction in the flow of water. He then carried out extensive drainage and irrigation works under the orders of the king. The prosperity was due to his engineering skill. He took steps in improving the irrigation system, which was indispensable for the cultivation of the staple food of Kashmiri. Kalahana

tells us that he (Suyya Verman) after examining the different classes of land, he procured a supply of river water for the villages which were dependant on rain water. After watching all village lands he observed the soil of each village and arranged water on permanent basis. Water courses were opened for each village, and thus excellent produce was obtained from such irrigation schemes. Not only this but the Engineer Minister Suyya founded the town of Sopur after his name on the silt accumulated from the waters of Wular. This town became a flourishing town wherefrom, the Wular water leaves the lake for the plains of the Punjab (Pakistan). He strictly prohibited the killing of fish and water fowl in the Wular lake. He granted the village Suyya kundal Markundal to the Brahmans in honour of his mother. Suyya constructed the Bund called it Suyya Sethu in the modern Sonawari Tehsil, after her name.

Under his glorious reign of 28 years there was almost peace and prosperity in the land. He attended the welfare of the population. Now Kharwar of Shali (192 lbs.) was sold for 36 dinnars which previously sold for 200 dinnars. Kashmir enjoyed a respite from natural calamities. He granted numerous villages to the Brahmans of the Valley as Jagirs. Avanti Verman's minister Suyya Verman constructed a new channel of Sind tributary which previously met Jhelum at Trigam village now met at Shahabadinpur (now Shadipur) where he constructed a temple of Vishnusawami. Here upto 17th century marks of the ropes which the Nishadas had fastened there were visible along with the old trees. In this way importance of the old city of Lalitaditya that is Parihasapura was diminished.

The king had encouraged saffron and pottery industry in his capital. Earthen wares and vassels of this reign are still extant both at the ruins of the temple and also at S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar in which the grain was stocked and distributed during the days of famine to his subjects. Leather and stone cutting industries were in flourishing State and use of leather jacket was common among his subjects. His capital city (Avantipur) was burnt and raised to the ground by the Damaras of Madavraja several times later on and its wealth was carried away.

The reign of Avantiverman witnessed a remarkable

revival of Sanskrit learning in Kashmir. Shivaswamin was one of the genius of Avanti Verman's court. Some of the others were 1) Ratnakara who wrote *Haraviyaja* in fifty cantos and lived under two kings that is Jayapida and Avantiverman 2) Anand Verdhana the author of *Dhvanyaloka* which was his master piece, it was in other words the "the light of suggestion" It was a new epoch in aesthetics. His works are a vast range of studies where we find the references of ancient writers. His works also consist of a commentary on Buddhist philosophy. He was a poet of repute. Kalahana mentions him the contemporary of Shiva Swamin and Ratnakara 3) Bata Kafilata the great pupil of Vasugupta, the originator of Shiva Sutras. He spread the teaching of his master chiefly as a religion; lived in the second half of 9th century. Siddha Somanand was also pupil of Vasugupta and lived towards the end of the Avanti Verman's rule He supplied philosophical reasoning in support of his masters teachings and thus laid the foundations of Advaita Shavaism or Trika as a system of philosophy. It is said that the king was a Vashnva and he did not patronise Buddhism in the Valley nor there is any mention of the erection of Buddhist sacred building. But in recent time remains of a Buddhist stupa have been traced near the village of Malangpur three miles south west of Avantipur.

Shiva Swamin is credited with the authorship of *Mahakavyas* and several dramas, prose works and other writings. But the *Kapphinabhyudaya* and few stray verses make up all which is available to the student of history, to read about Shiva Swamin's work. It assumed its importance in the history of Sanskrit literature and in the literary of Kashmir. It is of great help to us to show the development history of *kavya* in Kashmir and influence of Rattanakara in his own times.

He was also known as Rajanakara Ratna Kara Vigisvara who adorned his court. He is the author of *Haravijaya*. This poem consists of fifty cantos and tells us how the demon Andhakha was killed by Shiva. Ratnakara also composed several small poems. Then there is a mention of Mukta Kana. His works are not available but he was patronised by the king. According to Jacobi, Rudrata also lived during Avanti Verman's reign. He is the author of *Srigaratilaka*. Mukta the great Shiva philosopher lived in the court of Avanti Verman.



He was the author of *Abhidhavrattimatrka*. It deals with the theory of various rhetoricians on *abhidhe* "the apperceptive power" residing in words. *INDU RAJA* was another name of *Pratiharendra Raja*, another scholar in his court, who had composed a commentary on *Udbhat's Kavyalengkara*.

Some scholars believe that *Siddha Soma Nand* (850-900 A.D.) was a contemporary of *Avanti Verman* towards the end of his rule. He is the author and founder of *Shiva Philosophy* known as *Pratyabhijna* school of *Kashmiri Shivism*.

After a glorious reign of 28 years and three months *Avanti Verman* fell ill, and was determined to end his days at *Jyestheswara* temple, *Triphar* (modern *Tailbal*) and accordingly proceeded thither, where he resumed the *Vaishnava* faith which he had not disclosed to any one up till now and listening to the recital of the *Bhagavad Gita*, he terminated his career in June 883 A.D.

## SHANKARA VERMAN

(883-902 A.D.)

After *Avanti Verman* his son *Shankara Verman* was called upon to ascend the throne of *Kashmir*. He had to come across many difficulties at the initial stage. The recovery of the lost territories and rebuilding of a pan *Kashmirian* kingdom like that of the great *Karkotas* was the aim of the new king. From this reign onwards the record is one long succession of struggles between the rulers and usurping uncles, cousins, brothers, ministers, nobles and soldiers. During this century following the 902 A.D. the mastery of the kingdom of *Kashmir* changed hands as many as eighteen times. One claimant dethroned another. *Ratan Vardhana* son of *Sura Verman* was more powerful minister and loyal to the king. Some other minister put his own puppet *Sukha* as *yuvraj* (heir apparent). So the king declared war on *yuvraj* and later on imprisoned him. After some time he was freed. He now started on a round of foreign expeditions in the words of our historian, "to review the traditions of the conquest of the world". He started "through the country that had through the actions of the time become reduced in population and wealth". The practical result does not appear to have been much more than an

invasion of Ura modern Hazara (in Pakistan), an attack on Kangra and the subjugation of the city of Gujrat in the Punjab (Now in Pakistan), where was over thrown the power of Sikhs by the British in the last century. This conquest is in fact interesting because the conquering tendency was from Kashmir outwards, and not from Punjab to Kashmir. Shankara Verman wanted to build a grand kingdom of Kashmir. The first object of his expedition was the recapture of Davabhisara, the tract of the lower hills between the Jhelum and the Chinab which had become independent and was lying north of Gujrat. Next he defeated Prithivichand ruler of Kangra now in Himachal Pradesh, but Prithivichand's name does not appear anywhere in the Karkota dynasty who had ruled Kangra from ancient times. But Chand is the name ending of all members of Katoch family and Kalhana's Prithvi Chand is a mere historical figure. The ruler of Kangra paid homage to the king, but when he saw the immense host collected by the king, he was alarmed and escaped. Shankar Verman then routed up the power of king of Gujrat and seized his treasures, and kingdom. The king then returned to Kashmir and built his capital at Shankarapur (Panchasatra) which is now called Pattan to which our historian calls Shanker Pattan. It lost its proper appellation in course of time and became known by the name of Pattan, only. To built this city Shanker Verman used the material of Parihaspur, Lalitaditya's Capital. It is on the highway from Srinagar and Baramulla 23 KM from Srinagar. It is distinguished by a couple of temples one dedicated to Shiva as Shankara Gaurisa, and the other Sugandhesa, the later named after the queen Sugandha, the daughter of the king of the north. The two temples built by him are still standing on the road side During the later centuries this capital city became famous for trade in woolen clothes, cattle and the like. Shankara Verman's internal rule was characterised by excessive fiscal exactions and consequent operations. He accumulated a large wealth, then degenerated into the most insatiable avarice, and subjected his people to every kind of extortion. He levied heavy tolls and taxes exacted, undue proportions of the produce of land and let out to farm those lands which were dedicated to the temples by ancient rulers. He cheated his cultivators in the weight of

the seed corn, and expected a full return. He established a monopoly of sandal, incense, oil and many other articles of trade. Huge taxes were imposed on temple endowments and priestly corporations. He made excessive demands for forced labour (Begar) on account of foreign expeditions. Begar remained a characteristic feature of our Kashmir administration upto the reign of Maharaja Partap Singh, the third Dogra ruler. The expensive wars of Shankaraverman drained the treasury with the result that at the end of his campaigns he was compelled to undertake all sorts of measures for raising taxes. Collection was assigned to special revenue officers who were known as Kayastha the rapacious tribe of officials. He organised these on systematic bases and to have employed as a means for fiscal extortion used chiefly for transport purpose. Kalhana describes with much bitterness the baneful effects of this regime. He left men of learning unprovided with emoluments. The chief minister represented the harshness of his commands in vain to the monarch. To his son who had expatiated to him on the afflictions of his people he replied by desiring him to wait till he was king, when he might, if he pleased, relieve them, and he was equally insensible to the lesson he might have learnt from the neighbouring country of Darvabhisara, the king which with all his sons, had been lately killed in a popular agitation occasioned by his oppressive government.

Shankara Verman possibly thought he should divert the attention of his subjects to less unpopular occurrences, by engaging them in military expedition: for he is said now to have led an army to the north, where he subdued the people along the Indus, and entered the Urasa country, where he was shot in the neck with an arrow by a mountaineer. He was immediately put into a litter, and his death, which took place shortly afterwards, concealed from the troops who immediately marched back to Kashmir with all possible expedition. They reached near the frontier, in six days, where being now out of danger, they halted to perform the funeral obsequies of the monarch. He was consumed on a stately pile; three of his queens, a pandit, named Jaya Sinha, and two of his servants, burning themselves with the body. The place where he was cremated was Varanka which is garhi Dopattan, now



held by Pakistan. We should give credit to king Shankerverman who succeeded in streamlining the administration of the state. He created the post of Grhakrtyan which is a highest revenue officer. The king appointed this official personally and also he created Aksapatala (office of accountant general and also a recorder of official documents, land grants were also in charge of the same official. Every revenue official had as ambition to get the post of Grhakrityan. He also created two new administrative departments one was attapatibhaga (the official charged with share of the markets) and Grhartya (official concerned with domestic affairs). The first was probably concerned with the collection of taxes on market shops, artificers, etc. About the function and organization of the second office during Shankar Verman's time all that we learn from the *Rajatarangini* is that it was placed in charge of a treasurer (*sanjavara*) and five secretaries (*divira*) and that Shanker Verman collected revenue for this office by deducting or adding to the due weights, by fines on the villages and similar other imposts. He resumed the villages belonging to the temples after paying compensatory allowances (*pratikra*) to their possessors. Kalhana speaks, "losing most of his treasure by the distractions to which he abandoned himself. He carried off again and again by skilfully designed exactions, whatever the gods and others owned. We meet for the first time the names of *skandakas* (*Muquaddam*) and *gramakayasthas* (*patwari*) in the reign of Shanker Verman. These posts were not created by him evidently they existed from an ancient period. It is quite evident that Shanker Verman paid the wages of these officers from contributions levied on the villagers. In earlier times their wages seem to have been paid from other heads of income, presumably from king's exchequer. The only other official of Shankar Verman's time is *Dwaradhipa* or lord of the gates," He was the officer in charge of the defence of the passes (*dvara*) leading into Valley.

The powers and duties of this officer were to check the unauthorised movement of the people, from inside the Valley without the pass of permit called as *Khatirah*. A police force was kept under his control at the gates.

We have a copper coin of Shankkar Verman in S.P.S. Museum Srinagar, and from this day onwards we have unbroken series of coins.

The political history after Shankar Verman's death is a tale of jealousy, intrigue and civil strifes. Presence of a number of claimants for the throne and their rivalry prevented the working of the government. The impotency of the authority was fully exploited by the Tantrin fuedal barons who existed side by side with the Damaras. They abused their strength in the most shameless manner. They became the king makers and the kings of Kashmir at this time were mere puppets in their hands. The pretenders of the throne were anxious to purchase their favours, so that they could ascend throne. They had to pay big price for securing the power. The ex-chief minister of Kashmir has well said, "kings squandered their revenues, bartered their honour, the son intrigued against his father and the father set assassins upon his off spring, all lost their sense of truth and dignity for the acquisition of howsoever temporary of the fatal reward. At last Damaras succeeded in wiping the power of tantrins, who had so long held the crown a pawn but with this act of the monarch, the country passed from one trouble to another, both Damaras and Tantwere the source of trouble and were dangerous for the stability of the government. After Shankar Verman his infant son Gopala Verman succeeded to the throne under the gurdianship of his mother, Sugandha Devi. She became regent during his minority, and her ascendancy involved the country in a series of intestine disorders, as she seems to have been a woman of weak if not vicious character: Her minister and chief treasuer was Prabhakara Devo. It is said that the queen fell in love with him. Kalahana records how on a victorious expedition which he had led against the seat of Sahyya power at Ubh-bhadpur (modern Und) he proved disobedient and it was taken from him not without a conflict and given to Toramana, the son of Lilita, and gave him the new name of Kamaluka reference to whom is made in Alburini's list of the dynasty. After a nominal rule of two years Gopal Verman was destroyed and killed by an unscrupulous minister through magic. Samkata a suppositious son was put on the throne, but died after ten days, and with him ended the race of Shankar Verman. The kingdom was now without a legal occupant. Sughanda the queen assumed herself on the royal throne A.D. 904, first with the intention of securing the crown for a posthumous son

of Gopala Verman, as compelled by the military leaders of the kingdom. This child died soon after his birth and the rule of the land became difficult owing to the growing power of tantarins, a military caste of uncertain origin. Sughand founded the town of Gopalput Guripur, a village below Avautipur on the left bank of Jhelum. He also built Gopal Matha and Sughandapur and the temple of Gopal Keshva whose ruins can be seen on Srinagar Baramulla road. At this time we are introduced to some new actors in the scene who continued for a long period to influence very materially the disposal of the crown. They are of a military character evidently. It is only doubtful whether they are part of the native forces or whether they were mercenary bands of foreign adventurers. They are Tantrins and Ekangas. They sold their services to the princes and have infrequently become the masters of those whom they obeyed. They are now converts to Islam and are known as Tantrais. There was no male survivor of the family; this led to the uncertainty about the future and became a cause of widespread restlessness. Politicians now fished in the troubled waters. But before the situation was allowed to aggravate, influential representatives of the public opinion acted and meeting of the people was called to choose the future ruler of the country. It speaks of Sughanda that in this public gathering she was unanimously voted to the throne. Says Kalahana, upon the prayer of the subjects Sughanda assumed royal authority in person'' She was rewarded for her services for her country, which she rendered as the regent. She was loved by the people, trusted by the courtiers and admired by the army. The story of Sughanda had a tragic ending. There were intrigues and conspiracies, among the politicians. The league of Tantrin infantry was a formidable body which was able to punish and favour kings. Another faction was that of Ekangas as already mentioned, a royal boygurd who yielded enormous influence and power. Several nobles and feudal lords with wavering loyalty had their own troops. It was the feat of the king to secure on the throne which kept these factions under control and preserved law and order in the country. Nothing could save Kashmir falling into confusion when the iron hand was removed. In the beginning the Tantrins remained friendly and the Ekangas were



also sincerely devoted to Sughanda. So the affairs of the State were conducted smoothly and the peace loving people felt relieved. The queen devoted towards implementing various plans of reconstructions. She had drawn ambitious schemes to build towns and edifices. But barely a couple of years passed when the mischievous Tantrins started to give her trouble. They did not successfully cooperate to run the machinery of the government. But after some time they apprehended their own eclipse of destruction at her hands. Sughandha tried to take wind out of the Tantrin sails. She decided to abdicate and put a prince of royal birth on the throne. "Freed from the encumbrances of sovereign power, she thought she would be able to withstand the opposition of the unfriendly sections among the troops and the courtiers". She summoned for consultation the ministers, the grandees, the Tantrins and Ekangas, and Nirjitaverman was nominated by the assembly. The Tantrins opposed her (the queen) on the ground that the nominated was a debauchee and was so addicted to sensual pleasures that he could hardly rise from his bed even during the day time, for that reason he was nicknamed (the *Lame*) who was descended from Surya Verman half brother of Avanti Verman.

**Tantrins :** The Tantrins were a body of foot soldiers, i.e. infantry men who derived their designation from their tribal name Tantri and owned their close organisation to ethnic affinities. They formed a confederacy and were so powerful that they could punish or favour the rulers of this land. They are now converts to Islam. The names of this caste are generally found in the villages of Kashmir. such as Rahim Tantaray, Lassa Tantaray etc. Their occupation is agriculture and timber dealing. They were king makers or feudal land holders, if their interests suffered they could plunge the State in to chaos and civil strife. **The Ekangas** The exact meaning of their origin cannot be explained. They appear to have been a body in military fashion or employed chiefly for police duties. They had assumed considerable power and had become a force in the body politic of Kashmir, Sughanda relied on Ekangas through the goodwill of the Tantrins.

Nirjitaverman was no doubt a man of blameable character and unworthy of the great honour that Sughanda want-

ed to bestow on him. But hostility of the Tantrins sprang not from his choice as the future king but from the enmity that they bore towards the minister Prabhakura, who had humiliated them several times. Finding that the people were divided on the nomination of Nirjita Verman the Tantrins opposed the queen with the purpose of destroying her together with her lover. The tantrins were in favour of ten year old boy Partha, son of Nirjita Verman. They crowned him as the king of Kashmir which was not approved by queen Sugghanda. War broke out and the queen went to live in peace at the flourishing town of Hushakapur (modern Ushukur).

She could not rest or retire from active politics when her supporters and opponents were fighting each other. The loyal and devoted Ekangas would not surrender. They formed a united front with other sections who were faithful to the queen Sugghanda and persuaded her to lead them against the new government and in the fierce battle, which was fought in the neighbourhood of Srinagar in 914 A.D. The tantrins proved more powerful and won the day Ekangas were finally routed and Sugghanda was captured alive by her enemies and thrown in a prison at Nishapalaka Vihara where she died after some years in the most miserable state of captivity. After her death no prince was resourceful and capable to cope with the difficulties of the times. There was again chaos and anarchy in the kingdom. The Tantrins had united in separately, and made Partha their king. He was only ten years old. He ruled from 906 to 921 A.D. under the guardianship of his father (Nirjita Verman). His ministers were busy in amassing of bribes from oppressed people. The child's guardian was a puppet in the hands of Tantrins, who got huge Nazrana from the people. They tyrannised the people by the unscrupulous methods. Shankar Verdhana and Shambu Verdhana who rose into prominence. Partha built the famous temple of Merivardhanaswamin at Pandrethan two miles in the south of Srinagar near present day military cantonment which is still extant. Tantrins enriched themselves. They were helped by two ministers as mentioned above, namely Shankar Vardhana and Shambhu Vardhana. In 917-18 A.D. a serious famine visited the valley which carried away considerable part of population. But in this calamity the

ministers and the Tantrins amassed large fortunes by selling stores of rice at a huge price. A Kharwar of paddy (Dhani) was sold at one thousand dinnars. The human corpses could be seen floating in the waters of Jhelum, soaked and swollen. Kalahana gives us exact date of this famine 917 A.D. Partha (Bareth—Ain-i-Akbari) and his father were not in good relations. Ultimately father prevailed and he was thrown over in 921 A.D. by his son with the help of Tantrins. His reign lasted two years and one month and he was succeeded by his child son Chakarvarman under the gurdianship of his mother and grandmother. In 933-34 a fresh revolution of Tantrins roused his half brother Sura Verman to the throne, and Chakar Verman was deposed. He was the son of Nirjita Verman from another wife. He had some good qualities and did not like Tantrins nor they liked him because he would not give them rich gifts. He was again deposed and Chakarverman again came on the scene and promised them bigger rewards. On his accession to the throne, Chakra Verman had no money in the treasury, therefore he had to leave and run away to north. The Tantrins sold the throne to Shambu Verdhan. Shankar Verdhan the minister accompanied his master to exile but secretly tried to get an opportunity to get the throne, he sent Shambu Verdhan to Tantrins for compromise but he proved treacherous with his brother and paid huge bribes to the Tantrins. Chakra Verman turned for help to the Damras who were at this time residing in southern Kashmir, Hurapor (Surapur) in the Pir Panjal who possessed powerful influence with the mountain tribes. The king promised liberal gifts and they gave assurance to the king. Their leader Sangrama collected a large number of countrymen and advanced with Chakara Verman towards the capital (Srinagar). Tantrins were defeated along with Shankar Verdhan in a pitched battle, at Pampore. The Damaras under Chakra Verman got a decisive victory, five or six thousand Tantrins were killed, and completely routed thereafter their mention does not occur in the course of history. The entrance of the king into Srinagar was effected without any opposition. Chakara Verman executed Shambhu Verma who had been captured. Chakara Verman entered the city of Srinagar on a superb charger, holding in his left hand his helmet and



touching his turban in courtesy to the crowd with his right, amidst the clamour of Kettle and drums and shouts of the multitude. He soon however forfeited his popularity; being fascinated to the attractions of two daughters of a Dombha, who as public singers appeared before the king, he took them into his harem, and devoted his whole time to their impure society. The consequences were obvious: he incurred the reprehension of the wise and respectable, and what was of more importance to him by promoting the low connections of his favourites, above his former ministers of the military and sacerdotal orders, he roused their indignation and resentment. He gave up himself to a life of pleasure, a Dombha musician named Ranga who had come from a distant place outside Kashmir, had obtained great influence in the court but the Damaras who helped him to recover the kingdom were aggrieved and were neglected also and compelled to make way for those whose birth and services gave them no claim to pre-eminence. They felt neglected more severely, as contrasted with his past assurances of favour, and they determined to make him suffer the effects of their vindictive spirit. A party of them accordingly contrived to gain by night admission into the palace, and falling upon the king in the apartment of his favourite mistress unarmed and unprepared, they easily sacrificed him to their fury. He was slain after a reign of nearly fourteen years in the arms of his chief Domba queen Hamsi.

## UNAMATTA VANTI

(A.D. 937-939)

He was now placed on the throne. He was the son of Partha from his another wife. He was known as maniac or "mad Avanti." His claims to this election cannot be easily conceived, especially as in the grovelling tastes of this prince as well as in ferocity to temper, he exceeded all who reigned before or after his time. His associates were dancers, singers and buffoons; his favourite pastime, fighting birds or beasts, in which Parva Gupta his minister by his superior skill was his principal minister and friend notwithstanding which he engaged in treasonable designs, aided by Bhubhatta, Sarvata,

Saja, Kumuda and Amritakara. These individuals divided amongst themselves the chief offices of profit and power whilst Rakshasa, a Damara, chief commanded the army. By the advice of these miscreants, and the suggestion of his own sanguinary disposition the king commanded a general slaughter to be made of all whom he thought he had occasion to hate or fear and did not spare the members of his own family. His brothers he shut up in a dungeon and starved to death and his own father Partha was dragged from his retirement who was living with his family at the Jayendra Vihara (near about present Jamia—Masjid, Srinagar) where the charity of Buddhist monks supported him in his helpless poverty. Unmattavanti first had Partha's young sons, his own half brothers dragged away from there into prison, where he let them die of hunger. Some times in the night his father was attacked in the Vihara and cruelly murdered. His barbarity did not stop there; he went to view his father's corpse, and made the murderers show the wounds, that each had inflicted. They hesitated to do this in King's presence, when Parva Gupta to reprove the backwardness of his own son Deva Gupta, struck his dagger into the lifeless body to the great mirth and satisfaction. In further proof of this Prince's atrocious character it is related that upon its becoming necessary to oppose Damaras (feudal barons) who pillaged the whole country with impunity, the king used to amuse himself with cutting off the heads of his attendants and subjects and breasts of the women in order to try the temper of his sword, and perfect himself in the use of his weapons. He became a victim to a consumptive disease and did not enjoy long and passed away in July 939 A.D. Thus Kashmir was released from his tyranny after it had endured it a little more than two years.

## **SURAVARMAN II**

(A D. 939)

Sura Verman ascended the throne on the approach of his father's death. He was supposed to be son of king Umatta Vanti who had picked him up by his concubines some where. He was an infant under the management of his mother, and

his nominal reign was of short duration. Kamala Vardhana the commander who had been employed to clear the country of the Damaras, had succeeded in the undertaking, and made peace and alliance with the chiefs of Kampana and Marawa. (of present Anantnag district). He marched upon the city of Srinagar from Maraz (southern Kashmir) easily defeated the royal troops and Tantrins and Ekangas had helped him in his invasion, and entered the palace without opposition. It was easy for Kamala Varadhan to seat himself on the vacant throne. He had to give semblance of legality to it and therefore called an assembly of prominent Brahmans to seek from them his election as king. The opportunity was lost. The Brahmans desirous of selecting a suitable person, or instigated by other motives, deliberated for some time about the choice, and despatched emissaries to ascertain the merits and claims of various candidates. The wise men of the assembly whom Kalahana describes with much humour debated the issue for several days. He attempted to win the members of Purchita Corporation collected en mass and started a solemn fast to enforce a decision.

Amongst others the widow of Unmatti Varti sent messengers to the Brahmans to solicit their support of her son. On their road, they were encountered by a youth, who was just returning to his own country, and who accompanied them to the capital where the Brahmans unable to resist what our author thinks the impulse of destiny, proclaimed him Yasaskara as soon as they beheld him, sovereign of Kashmir. The person thus suddenly elevated to the throne was Yasaskara Deva a son of Prabhakaradeva, a former minister and councillor of queen Sugandha. The rule of the Utpala dynasty came to an end.

## YASASKARA DEVA

(939-948 A.D.)

As mentioned above he was the son of Gopal Verman's treasurer Prabhakar Dev known as Kama Dev who had left Kashmir in poverty and had returned with the reputation of learning and eloquence. He belonged to the village of Pisachapur. Kama Dev in his youth had been brought by



Meru Vardhana and being a lad of abilities rose with the patronage of that minister to the Ganjadhicharya, the command of the guards, which he held under the reign of Shankar Verman. Having occasion to dread the hostility of Prabhakar the favourite of queen Sughandu, he determined to place his son out of danger, and sent him into another country with a young friend named Phalguna. They had resided abroad for some time. At length his father being dead, and propitious dreams exciting his hopes Yasaskara resolved to return to his native country, and it was upon this occasion that he encountered the agents of queen and learning from them the object of their journey accompanied them to the capital Srinagar where he so unaccountably gained the unsolicited choice of the sacerdotal electors.

The vigour and equity of the new king fully justified his election. He re-established order and security, and gave Kashmir a period of repose which had been long unknown. Civil wars and internal troubles had oppressed Kashmiris since the reign of Avanti Verman. Civil wars had made people most miserable. Kalhana has great appreciation for the benevolent work of this king. He controlled the royal officers to such an extent that they began to look upon the state treasury as their own. It is said that foot soldiers were absorbed in his army, and he took strong measures to suppress Tantrins who had on previous occasion made various governments instable through their high handedness. Theft and murder were abolished, the roads were perfectly safe, and the shops were left open throughout the night without a guard. The distinction of classes was rigidly maintained, and the Chandalas and Dombas no longer administered the affairs of State, nor did the Brahmans carry the arms. One of them is narrated by Abul fazl, a reference to whom will perhaps be sufficient to satisfy any curiosity that may be excited on his head. Yasaskara made several endowments including Matha (monastery) for students of North India (Arya Varta) for the higher studies, and granted 55 thousand land grants (Aghahahars) to deserving Brahmans: on the banks of Jhelum on Kuthkul (kashthela). It is quite clear that in the 10th century Kashmir maintained cultural links with other regions of Central Asia and India. Kalahana gives a memorable

account of Yasaskar's wisdom of administrative setup, especially of Justice. He gives some illustrations to show his skill, in the interpretation of legal contracts. Once a man who was about to commit suicide by starvation by the unscrupulous conduct of a merchant, represented the king, I was once a wealthy citizen but I became a poor person through the will of God and fell in debt. The creditors were demanding money which I could not liquidate so I sold off my house to a merchant. There was a well attached to my house which yielded rent from vegetable growers and this I retained for subsistence of my wife. After about the absense of 20 years I have came back to my birth place I searched my wife and now she had become a maid servant. Her condition moved me and she informed me that the merchant had turned her away from her well. I then went to the court they dismissed my suit, I therefore determined to make an end to my life. The king assembled the court and enquired the real facts they showed him the sale deed in which it was written that man had sold his house along with his well. But the king doubted. He then diverted the subject as though he had been fully satisfied. In course of conversation he showed interest in the jewels they put on and took also from the merchants. finger his ring for closer examination. After that he returned to another room telling them to wait. He secretly despatched a servant with the ring to the merchants house, instructing him to show it to merchants accountant as a token and to get from him the daily account book of the year in which the deed had been executed, for being produced before the court where it had been demanded. When the king examined the entries under the date on which the deed had been executed and found among other items of expenditure the entry of 10 hundred dinnars which had been given to the official recorder. A small sum was payable as fee the payment of this some showed that the Registration had been bribed to write Sa (together) in placed or Ra(without) He then showed this in the assembly questioned the recorder whom he had brought up under the promise of impunity and convinced the counsellors the king excepted the petition and exiled the defedent from the land.

One day a distressed man represented the king that his hundred gold coins fell into a well. A man offered to get the

coins out and promised that if he recovered the amount he would return the amount he liked. But he gave me he said only two coins and openly retained for himself 98. When I protested to the people I was frowned out being told that in your region all transactions are carried out in strict pursuance of the letter of the agreement. The king summoned the man from Lavanotsa (a place on the high wood near Srinagar) who asserted he had done it with the man's own commitment. The king passed his judgement and ordered him to return 98 coins and himself to retain only two coins.

After promoting the happiness of his subjects for several years, Yasaskara, was doomed to suffer the loss of his own. One of his wives was detected in an intrigue with a watchman of the palace, a man of low caste and it appears that the king was more afflicted by this latter circumstance than anything else, as it had prophaned the purity of his birth. To expiate the stain thus contracted he made liberal donations and land grants to the Brahmans as already mentioned on the banks of Jhelum (Kapistaka-Kuthi-Khul) and continuing to dwell upon his disgrace, his health became affected and retired in a temple at Vijayashwara (Bijbehara) along with two and a half thousand gold pieces. It is said that in the latter part of his reign he fell a prey to avarice and amassed fortunes through illegal means. He is discredited for mixing freely with the Dombas and other lower classes.

Before leaving the palace for Bijbehara temple through a boat he deposited his sword at the base of the illustrious Linga of Shiva at Reneshvar temple believed to be the present site of Bota Kadal Zadiabal Srinagar. He also directed the nobles and leaders to elect as successor his kinsman Varnata the son of Rama Deva passing over his own son Sangrama Deva of whose legitimacy he entertained some doubts. The arrangement thus made was far more agreeable to the men in power, for Varnata was a prince in the vigour of life, whilst Sangrama Deva was an infant, during whose feeble administration they flattered themselves that they should be able to appropriate the wealth and influence of the government to themselves and their adherents.



**VARANTA and SANGRAM DEVA**

(948 A.D., 948-949 A.D.)

Varanta is believed to have ruled Kashmir for one day. He did not mind to visit Yasaskar at Bijbehara and enquire his health. Parva Gupta his chief minister had designs on the throne. He cancelled this succession. Varanta was thrown into the prison and although he appears to have escaped at the time he shortly afterwards fell a victim to the jealousy and ambition of the strongest party by whom Sangrama Deva was established in the government Yasaskar was for-saken by his family. The gold pieces (two and half thousand) bound up in the hem of his dress were snatched away from him and divided among the ministers by Parva Gupta under his very eyes while he lay rolling in agony on his death bed. Parva Gupta's power had become supreme after Yasaskar's death. He installed a child king's grandmother on the throne as his guardian and himself wielded the power together with other ministers (Bhu Bhatt and others). He was not satisfied with this arrangement and was unable to destroy the child on account of the fear of a rebellion of the Ekangas, he employed witch craft for his extermination. He selected his troops on a day when people did not move outside on account of heavy snowfall and surrounded the palace. In a fight he killed Rama Varadhan, the faithful minister of Sangram Deva, who had offered resistance in company with his Buddha, he tied a string with flowers which had been brought as an offering by his father's (Yasaskar) round the neck of Sangram Dev and dragged him from the throne. He then killed him in another hall and threw him with a stone bound to his neck at night in the Jhelum (Vitasta).

**PARVA GUPTA**

(949-950 A.D.)

He was complete in armour with his sword drawn seated himself on the throne and received the homage of his accomplices and of the terrified citizens. He is mentioned to have descended from a humble family of clerks. He did not enjoy long the crown which he had obtained through treachery. His

father was Sangram Gupta and was born in Parovisoka (area beyond Pir Panchal) and his father and his ancestors were devoted to clerical job. The princes, Ekangas (body guard) chief ministers, officials and Tantrins were afraid of him and showed nothing but treason, and were always bent upon sedition. One day one of the Ekangas named Madanaditya burst his large drum through carelessness in the king's assembly hall and the king became very furious. His garments were taken off and shaved his beard and head. He oppressed people and exacted money from them. To perpetuate his memory he founded with his illgotten wealth the shrine of Parvagupteshvara at the Skinda Bhavana Vihara which is today Khanda Bhawan, on the right bank of Jhelum near the sixth Bridge (Nawa-kadal) Srinagar, which is identified by Dr Stein the present grave yard of Mohd. Basurur Sahib. The wicked ruler proposed to a widow of Yasashkar Deva named Gauri a lady of superb beauty but since she was a pure hearted woman and this was unbearable to her. She desired to see the temple of Yasashkar Swamin which her husband had left unfinished completed and so she sent him word that she would marry him provided the temple is completed. The king in full pride had that temple completed in a very few days. He now expected to win his sweetheart but alas this lady lit the fire and in order to save her honour jumped into it and was killed. After short reign of little more than a year this prince suffered the fate due to his crimes. He was killed by a party of enemies at Sureshvari Tirtha (it was a tirtha in village Ishabair nine miles in the east of Srinagar near present nishat bagh) and was succeeded by his son, Kshemagupta.

### **Causes of Decline of Buddhism in Kashmir**

Buddhism started its decline as early as the 6th century A.D. when its monks began to lead the life of worldly comforts. By the 8th and 9th centuries Buddhism became so corrupt that it no longer attracted the people. In the 10th and 11th centuries, the monks and nuns lost high ideals of morality. The eminent writers and scholars of Kashmir like Ksemendra and Somadeva bear ample testimony to this state of affairs, during these centuries. Upto the middle of the 14th century the hold of Shaktism over the Mahayana Buddhism became tightened and

latter became fully erotic. Each Dhyani Bodhisattva began to have a consort. Later Karkot rulers patronised Shavisim and Vashnavism form of worship and thus this was one of the foremost cause of the decline of the Buddhism in the Valley. According to Chinese sources the king of Kashmir, Mihirukula persecuted Buddhist followers and slew Buddhist Bhikshus with a religious motive, because he was himself a follower of Shavism. He demolished Viharas and Buddhist monasteries in the valley. It is said that he demolished 1600 topes and monasteries and put to death 9 kotis of adherents of Buddhism. Hindu Kings of the valley after king Avanti Verman (855-883 A.D.) did not show any regard for Buddhism. On the other hand as our Kalahana Pandit narrates King Ksemgupta and other rulers like Harsha Deva and Raja Deva showed great disrespect towards Buddha and Buddhist monuments. Khemagupta demolished Jayandira Vihara and the silver image of the Buddha was melted and instead dedicated a temple in the name of Shiva at the same place. Harsha Deva also demolished the great monastery of Raja Vihara at Parihaspur and took away its wealth. In brief Buddhism lost state patronage. Brahmans of the Valley had great jealousy towards the growing popularity of Buddhism and they always tried to eliminate Buddhism from the soil of Kashmir. The great writers, scholars and reformers like Shankaracharya, Abhinbagupta, Sidda Somananda, Bhatta Kallata, Vasugupta, Mamatta, Shiva Swamin and others preached Shavism and its different schools in the valley and hence it had a great onslaught. During the Lohara period 950 to 1003 and 1003 to 1101 A.D. Buddhism in the Valley degenerated and lost the royal patronage. They also lost their high ideals and led corrupt life. Nuns were found acting as go-between to make love affairs successful. The works of Ksemendra and Somadeva bear testimony to this. The last king who gave death blow to Buddhism as already mentioned was Harsha Deva who is termed by Kalahana as Mleccha. He destroyed not only the Buddhist Viharas but also Hindu temples, for he was influenced by Turuska Mercenaries (Muslims). He got divine images dragged and covered with night-soil. During the later Lohara-period there was some revival of Buddhism in the Valley. Kings like Jayasimha and queen Ratana Devi patronised Buddhism and built Viharas



and Mathas. Ratana Devi built a town and a great Vihar after her name now known as Ratnipoora village (Pulwama Tehsil). Jayashmias minister Rihana was a pious man. He built a Vihara at Bhalerakaprapa in honour of his deceased wife Sussala. She was a devotee of Buddhism and built a magnificent building on the site of Cankunavihar at Parihaspur for the Buddhists. Jayasimha adorned Bhattapur with vihar and he also built a Matha in his own town at Simhapur now known as Simpur on Srinagar Anantnag Highway. He also completed Bijya Vihar. His Commander-in-Chief's wife Cinta, built a Vihar on the banks of Jhelum with other five buildings. Kalahana also tells us that there was vigorous revival of Buddhism during the later Lohara kings. But this was short lived.

Due to persecution of Harsha Deva and Raja Deva many Buddhists and Brahmanas fled from Kashmir and most of them settled in Ladakh and Baltistan who later on accepted Islam as their faith.

Initially Buddhism had started in reverse direction after the death of Kanishka and his successors. Nagarjuna was responsible for the destruction of the traditional customs and rites of the land. It is said that tutelary dieties of the Valley-Nagas were angry and caused excessive cold and snowfall in the Valley which destroyed Buddhists in the Valley. Finally a pious Brahman Chandra Deva restored the rites and rituals prescribed in Nilmat Puran which also gave death blow to the Buddhism in the Valley.

### **THE FIRST LOHARA DYNASTY : KSHEMAGUPTA (950-958 A.D.)**

At the accession of the new ruler the political condition of Kashmir had deteriorated and cultural degeneration had set in at the Kashmir court. It was in 950 A.D., a drunkard. Kshemagupta became the ruler of the valley. He was of a mean nature and felt pleasure in the company of wicked men. He was addicted to the vices of dice, liquor and women. A hundred sycophants led by one Phalguna attended upon him. In the days of this monarch the Kashmir court was "replete

with harlots, knaves, imbeciles and corruptors of boys". There was no place for high minded men, scholars or thinkers in the kings assembly. He used to spit on the beards of the venerable men and poured abuses into their ears and blows on their skulls. It was not at all extraordinary therefore that the kingdom should become a prey to civil dissension and foreign inroads as the affairs of state were entirely neglected and the ministers alone fit to conduct them, were obliged to abandon the court in order to avoid the ridicule and abuse, or even personal contumely which they were compelled to receive from the prince. The famous Yayavendra Vihara (near Jamia Masjid Srinagar) which had been built by king Jayendar uncle of our founder city of Srinagar, Parvarsen II was burnt down by the kings soldiers because a powerful Damra Sangrama had taken shelter in it. He for the benefit of his temple Kshemagauresa believed to have been existing near present confluence of Dudganga with Jhelum at Chattabal bridge Srinagar, plundered the Jayendra Vihara and took away brass image of Buddha and adorned Kshemagauresa with lingam of Shiva. He also founded Sri Kanthiniatha and Kenamatha close to Ushkur (Baramulla). This was the only act of his reign.

King Simharaja, king of Lohara gave his daughter Didda in marriage to Kshemagupta. This marriage had important effects on the future history of Kashmir. It linked her with Lohara. The territory had left its name to the present valley of Loharian, comprising the mountain districts immediately adjoining Kashmir valley, on the south west and now included in the Poonch district (Parnotsa), Kshemagupta's union with Didda brought Kashmir under the rule of Lohara family which continued to hold Kashmir as well as its own original home down to the times of Kalahana and later. The maternal grandfather of this queen the illustrious Bhima Sahi built the high temple of Vishnu Bhima Kesava. He was the ruler of Gandhara. Bhima Keshva's temple was located in the present day Bumgoo village on Srinagar Pahalgam road (37 mile) on lidder river and a rich treasure of gold and jewels was endowed which was confiscated by king Kasha Deva a century later. Near this temple is the Ziarat of a muslim saint Baba Bam-ud-din Sahib, a desciple of Sheikhul Aalam,

Shiek Nur-u-Din Noomi and forms a popular pilgrimage place for the muslims of the valley. According to the legend the saint was originally a Brahman ascetic (Sadhu) and bore the name of Bhuma Saadh an orthodox Brahman resident of Bijbihara. Didda exercised great influence on her husband. People of Kashmir would call him Didda-Khema. He struck his coins in Kashmir. They bear the legend *Di-Ksema-guptada* (Va) written upon them. The reasons that led the king to associate his wife's name with his own are not clear. One such coin is available in S.P.S. Museum Srinagar. Kshema Gupta amused himself in Jackal-hunts on Karewa of Damodar udkar and chakdar and one day he chased a she Jackal for a considerable distance and urged the beast to the pangs of death, the prince observed flames issuing from the mouth of the howling animal as it expired and caught the disease called *luta* which hastened his premature death. He was removed to Ushkur (Baramulla) where he was cremated in December 958 A.D. In accordance with the custom of the times, Didda wanted to cremate herself with the dead body of Kshemagupta along with several other queens, and a matter of fact, she had ordered all the preparations for so doing after securing the necessary permission of the premier Phalguna. But Narvahana, a prudent minister of the State who realised the value of Didda's services to the people and what she was capable of doing for their welfare, dissuaded her from ending her life. Didda agreed and changed her mind. Didda had gradually assumed the control of administration even during her husband's time and in course of time her potentialities to handle the state craft were fully unfolded. She ran the Government and attended to every detail of administration. She was in direct charge of civil departments as well as armed forces, nothing could be done without her consent and permission. Kshemagupta was succeeded by his infant son Abhimanyu who was installed on the throne in 958 A.D. and ruled upto 872 A.D.

The change demanded greater capacity on the part of the dowager queen to efficiently run the administration. She could not succeed until she had enlisted the willing co-operation of all ministers and councillors. Narvahana was the most devoted and sincere of them all. But the afore-mentioned



circumstances under which Didda decided against becoming a sati created suspicions in the mind about Premier Phalguna. Mischiefmongers too poisoned her ears and she was made to believe that the Prime Minister wanted her to die in order that he could usurp the kingdom. Even during the life-time of Kshemagupta Didda bore a grudge against Phalguna for he had given his own beautiful daughter in marriage to the king. Now the enmity deepened and the queen-mother would not tolerate the Prime Minister near the throne. Phalguna was an enlightened statesman endowed with qualities of heroism, vitality and foresight, which made him an eye-sore to his rivals. Coming to know by indications that Didda bore malice against him he left the capital and went to Parnotsa (poonch) with a large number of troops. Revengeful Didda did not hesitate to despatch men to assassinate him. Thus insulted and incensed he returned to Baramulla where he collected sufficient forces to challenge Didda. At this turn of events the queen-mother and her councillors were frightened. Finally, either through the dexterous negotiations of Didda or through his own sense of loyalty to the crown, Phalguna abandoned his plan to attack Srinagar and laid down his arms in the temple of Varaha now Kothi Tirtha Baramulla, on the right bank of Jhelum.

Hardly had the battle cries from the side of Phalguna died down when another danger raised its vicious head in the capital. There were two princes of royal blood-Mahiman and Patala residing in the Palace who hatched a conspiracy to dethrone the infant king, turn out the dowager queen and capture power for themselves. But the ever-vigilant Didda getting the scent of the sedition ordered the banishment of the conspirators from the country. Mahiman immediately repaired to the house of his father-in-law Shaktisena, and influential grandee, to hide himself. The official appointed to execute the orders went there to serve them upon the accused. Shaktisena was offended at this and openly sided with Son-in-law. Thereafter, a powerful league was formed to spread the treasonous atmosphere and encourage people to rise in rebellion against Didda. Some feudal barons commanding their own contingents of troops joined the confederacy. Among them were Kimanaka, Mukula, Ermantaka of Parhaspura (modern Paras-

ted that a lame woman could stand firmly and successfully against the onslaughts of influential men equally experienced in the arts of war and diplomacy. "She whom none believed had the strength to step over a cattle track" says Kalhana. "The lame lady traversed in the manner of the son of the wind (Hanuman), the confederate forces."

The rebellion was over, the intelligent regent correctly realised the need to win over the powerful supporters of Mahiman. She showed how great a judge of the human nature was she. Knowing that for men of intergity "favours were superior even to gold given in bribes." She straight away invited Yashodara and ordered his appointment as supreme commander of the army and other defence forces. After some time when Mahiman was left without any following of consequence, she got him killed and thus became undisputed ruler of the state.

Shahi Thakkana, Ruler of Udabhandpura, had rebelled against Didda. She directed Yashodara to proceed to Udabhandpura and brought him under his knee. But in accordance with the generous policy of Didda the supreme commander reinstated the fallen ruler before returning to his home. But it was reported to queen that Yasodhara had accepted a bribe for reinstating the vanquished foe. Yashodhara fell from grace and was banished from the land. Yasodhara was punished because of his unauthorised conciliatory towards the enemy which "was not desired by Didda as there was no certainty of Thakkana's remaining loyal to Kashmir. Yashodhara created a banner of revolt. This time it proved more threatening than on the previous occasion. The rebel forces reached the lion gate of the palace in a short duration and the end of Didda seemed at hand. But Didda remained undaunted; nothing disturbed her mind. She ordered the immediate removal of the boy-king Abhimanyu to a sanctuary, this time to Bhattarakamatha. Bradmar a quarter in Srinagar known as Bulbul Lanker. Throwing a glance from a tower of her palace she beheld the royal armies were in disorder and there was no discipline in the army. All of her important supporters, with the exception of Naravahana and his few followers had deserted her. Her fate was at its anvil. But as luck would have it the enemy frittered away at this time and

when it did attack the next day she had already mustered some forces of Ekangas to form into a "phalanx to defend the palace." She commanded the army in person and thus turned the tide and within a short time the non-combatants the onlookers and the sight-seers mobilised and thus defeat was turned into victory.

Rajkila Bhatta, a general of the royal army, valorously penetrated through the ranks of the rebels which demoralised them; hostile forces ran shelter to shelter and the rebels took to their heels. Himmaka were slain on the battlefield. Yashodhara and Eramantaka were captured by the king's soldiers. "Didda was less generous this time; iron had begun to enter her soul; her feeling had hardened; and she punished all the imprisoned rebel leaders as suited her purpose. Eramantaka was thrown into the Jhelum from a bridge (probably near present Habba Kadal Bridge) with a big boulder tied round his neck. This incident occurred in 962-63 A.D. which depicted the weakness of the administration. A big shakeup was therefore planned and executed. She overhauled completely the administration of the state. For more than six decades big officials including ministers and feudal lords, had formed a pernicious habit of playing with the lives of the kings and the interests of the people. Nobody was able to remove them or control them. As a result of it, Rakka became the new chief of the army. Sindhu, a son of a litter carrier, was made incharge of the royal treasury. The services of Naravahana, "the best of ministers," was also recognised, and retained. When the conditions regained normalcy and the administration was re-established, says Pt. P.N. Bazaz, Didda conferred the highest title of Rajanaka (modern Razdan) added as surname amongst Pandits of today, on Narvahana. Other tried men of loyalty were suitably rewarded and appointed to key posts in civil administration. Didda created a post of Ganja (General treasurer) and as already mentioned Sindhu held this post. But unfortunately he started back biting which has proved the bane of Kashmir politics through out in its history. Sindhu told queen-mother that Narvahana had absorbed all power in himself which made the queen apprehensive. Things came to such a pass that Didda refused to give audience to Naravahana which resulted in Narvahana's committing suicide. Kashmir



now sustained an irreparable loss and it again plunged into turmoil, and disorder. After she got rid of Naravahana Didda resolved to punish the Damras who had been gaining strength for some years in the past. The first to fall a victim to her fury were the sons of Sangrama, the Damara chief, of Uttarghosa (present village of Goosh in the Kupwara Tehsil to the extreme north-west of Kamraj). She wanted them to be done to death. But they made their escape to their home place and there they killed, Kayyaka the lord of the gate and others who opposed them. A Damra confederacy was formed which conspired for her downfall. Rakka the Commander-in-Chief suddenly died and left Didda in a critical position. She cast her eyes around for a strong man to replace the deceased but found none. Therefore she recalled Phalguna, the former premier, who was known as the hero of Rajauri and other territories. Phalguna responded and suppressed the Damara revolt, for we hear no more of them for some time to come.

King Abhimanyu was coming of mature age and had grown full blooded handsome youth. He had studied the four Vedas and other scriptures. He was greatly respected by learned men and sons of savants. By temperament Abhimanyu was quite a different person. He was peace loving, kind hearted and studious. Didda considered him too gentle to govern face ups and downs of the state, and responsibilities. Didda was ambitious and power thirsty. She was not willing to hand over the reins of administration. After some time Abhimanyu fell victim to consumption which ended his life in 972 A.D. Kalahana says he died of consumption but Mohmed Azam asserts that he was poisoned by his mother. Kalhana's account is trust worthy which represents her as engaged for construction of religious and charitable deeds. A period of creative activity followed when Didda was occupied in founding towns constructing edifices and building shrines.

### **Didda as Builder**

Didda was greatly shocked of his sons death. In order to dispel her grief, she resolved to act as a noble ruler and administrator. First of all, in memory of her son she built a shrine of Abhimanyu Swamin and the town of Abhimanyupura

which is identified by Dr. Stein as present day Bimyun (Bemina). In her own name she founded Diddapura (location unknown) where she built the magnificent temple of Didda swamin and also a spacious convent specially meant for the use of people from Madhya Desha (the middle of India round Kanau), Lata (the country between the Narmada and Tapti) and Saurashtra (Gujrat). She built another temple of the same name Didda Swamin but of white stone. Its location is probably in Diddamar, locality between Nawa Kadal and Safa-Kadal. She also built Kankanapura (perhaps modern Kangan village on the right bank of the Sindh) and Didda Matha which had left its memory in the name of Diddamar on the right bank of Jhelum below Safa-Kadal which at present is the grave yard of Malik Mohd. Yatu (Malik Sahib, Safakadal Srinagar). To commemorate the glory of her father Simharaja she founded a shrine and a convent for the Brahmans of the plains and called it Simha Swamin. At the confluence of the rivers Jhelum and Sindh (Modern Shadipur) she built chapels dedicated to Vishnu. She consecrated sixty-four foundations observes Kalhana. Besides the original works some of which were really magnificent and grand, Didda repaired and renovated nearly all the temples and shrines which had been damaged by fire or were in bad condition due to various causes. She also built a grand Matha after Volga, the women who carried the lame queen on her back at the games, and called it Volga-matha. She also repaired Jayavindara Vihara which had been badly damaged by her husband Kshemagupta who had also plundered this Vihara. In these acts of piety she was encouraged and helped by Bhuyya the city perfect who was himself a pious man and a brother of Sindhu, the treasurer.

The building of Viharas by Didda shows that Buddhism had only survived at least until the eleventh century but also continued to receive royal patronage. There is, however no doubt that it had already lost its mass appeal. A bronze statue to Bodhisatava Padmapani, with six arms, having dhayani-budha, Amitabha his spiritual ego on his head and two goddesses Tara And Brikuti on his either side, has been discovered. Made in Didda's time, it is, in the words of Dr. Sarla Khosla "a conspicuous example of decayed Buddhism". The scholar further remarks that "this sculpture tells the

struggle of Buddhists to survive against engulfing Brahmanism and Shaktism”.

Time is a great healer. She became very ambitious and her lust for power was irrepressible. It is said she put to death Nandigupta her grand son after short reign of nearly a year in 973 A.D. “by witch craft”. In a similar manner she also disposed of King Tribhavana, one of her grand sons. He had also been on the throne for two years. Then there remained her last grandson Bhimgupta. She also put him to death without any hesitation, angrily comments Kalhana. Soon after, her prime minister Phalguna also died, he had been exercising restraint on the old lady. With his death also disappeared all bars of restraint on her and she began to commit “hundred-fold excesses” by open misconduct, infuriated just as a female elephant in rut which has torn off its face-covering. During the reign of Nandigupta a family of warrior Khasha tribe migrated from Poonch to Kashmir in search of employment. It comprised of five sturdy youths, all brothers namely Tunga, Sugandhisha, Prakata, Naga and Attayika. Tunga who came as a grazier, was originally a keeper of buffaloes and subsequently a courier in the service of minister, was very handsome, well built and intelligent. Once he was in the attendance of his minister when Didda’s eyes fell on his pleasing appearance and she fell in love at first sight. The queen mother soon arranged to meet Tunga, in her private room. Some of the ministers, nobles and Brahmans did not like this behaviour but unmindful of “calumny and undaunted by opposition” she carried on love affair. Tunga was not only favoured by the queen mother as her pet, he was gradually promoted to the position of Prime ministership. Tunga now became the dominating personality in the State. This fact naturally brought discontentment and disaffection among the old officials who had been ousted. Insurrections started and attempts were made to dislodge and pull down Tunga. But each time with his valour and queen’s diplomacy it fizzled out. They were punished and penalised and one Bhuya was subjected to inhuman torture and murdered with poison. King Nandigupta who had begun to develop the powers of understanding made attempts to oppose his grandmother. It was suspected that he was under the influence of her enemies. Didda imprisoned him. There



he became a source of trouble, and thus was murdered in 980-81 A.D. She now became the sole ruler of the State. There was no male heir to the throne in whom would centre the treasonable activities of Didda's enemies. Therefore her enemies disgruntled officials united and organised a revolt. They invited Vighraharaja the son of Didda's brother who was strong and man of actions. This was decided in the council. He was the ruler of neighbouring territory. With a view to cause disintegration and disaffection, the shrewd Vighraharaja on arrival induced the Brahmanas of the principal shrines (Agraharas) of the Valley to enter upon a hunger strike, or fast (Prey Paversa). This protest of Brahmanas caused great disturbance and the whole population was in revolt:- fast means a protest against some actions of the government which is considered a serious matter, which could even bring the downfall of the government. The common people who were fed up with the corrupt and oppressive administration, also rose on this occasion. Their chief target was, however, not the queen but Tunga whom they wanted to seize and kill. A thorough search was made everywhere to capture and kill him, and he had to seek shelter in Didda's private room. Didda fearing revolt hid Tunga for some days in room with closed doors. Now she tried to break the Brahman's fast and easily purchased them by offering handsome bribes. However the revolt fizzled out. It was difficult for insurgents to match Didda in her wiles. "Through her cunning moves and crafty ways she was again able to win over the leading Brahmanas and hunger strike terminated. Vighraharaja now crestfallen and retreated as swiftly as he came". Tunga was now called upon to deal with a refractory feudatory, of Rajuri. The ruler of Rajuri had shown arrogance and in consequence an army was despatched to subdue him. It met with disaster. It was nearly annihilated in a gorge on Tosamaidan route by Prithvipala the chief who commanded his troops in person. Two of the Kashmiri ministers, Sipataka and Hamaraja also perished at that place. Didda commanded Tunga to proceed with a bigger force and retrieve the position. This army went by a different route and was able to enter the town of Rajuri. Prithvipala sued for peace and accepted the terms which were dictated to him. This brought prestige for Tunga and even

those who were inimical to him began to admire his qualities. Didda honoured him on his return to the city of Srinagar, and was made the chief-of the army staff, in addition to his being the prime minister.

The closing years of Didda's rule were disturbed by a rising of the Damras. This too was suppressed by Tunga "with the courage of a lion" and many of them were put to sword.

Queen Didda had grown very old. She had functioned as a virtual ruler of Kashmir for more than half a century 950-1001 A.D. It was her misfortune to witness the end of her progeny. She felt worried about the future of her home land, and was concerned now to instal a capable prince on the throne before her death. Didda's brother Udayaraja had several sons. After consultation with her ministers she decided to select one out of them for the throne. She called all of them in the palace, so says Dr. Stein with a view to test their abilities for the rulership of the kingdom. The boys were of tender age. She now hit up on a plan to test their abilities. She threw down before them a heap of apples (palevata) and asked each of them to secure as many fruits as he could. How many of the fruits can each get hold of "thus she spoke and thereby cause scramble among princes and they fought with each other dealing blows and causing injuries. Only Sangramaraja held plenty of them and had gone without injury. Answering Didda's questions as to how he contrived to do so, Sangramaraja replied by making other engrossed in the struggle with one another while remaining apart I secured the fruits and at the same time was not hurt. No doubt all things come to him who waits. Queen Didda solemnly declared the name of Sangramaraj as her successor to the throne of Kashmir. Sangramaraja rule the land for twenty five years 1003-1028 A.D. which was comparatively a long period in view of the short rule of those times. It was during his days that Mahmud of Ghazni invaded Kashmir but was repulsed and had to withdraw having failed to reduce a strong garrisoned outpost of Loharkot on Tosamaidan route. The powerful and dowager queen breathed her last in the month of September 1003 A.D.

**Character and Estimate of Didda**

Pt. P.N. Bazaz has given following remarks about her character. She ranks among the remarkable personalities in the medieval period not only of Kashmir State but also of the Indian sub-continent. She undoubtedly stands and shoulder above other rulers of the valley after Avantivarman till the Hindu rule came to close. That she was a capable organiser, a clever diplomat, and a determined administrator and a bold fighter, no fair minded critic can deny. But she has been denounced as cruel, ruthless and unscrupulous ruler and a profligate, voluptuous and dissolute woman. Perhaps Kalhana was the first historian to paint her in black colours and others who followed him have done the same without caring to investigate the matter.

While making an impartial appraisal of Didda's character as a queen, an administrator or a human being it is fair to keep in mind that she lived through a very difficult period of Kashmir history when Hindu polity in the State had for more than a century, manifested signs of decline. Gone was that grandeur, vitality and lustre which had distinguished Kashmir monarchs for hundreds of years; the stability, progress and prosperity which produced kings great Meghvahana, renowned Lalitaditya or noble Avantivarman had vanished. For decades worthless men, idiots and scoundrels sat on the throne who were totally unfit to rule and had completely abandoned themselves to vulgar and inhuman pursuits. Base intrigues, coldblooded assassinations and down-right treacheries were the order of the day. Sixteen kings had assumed power after Shankaravarman but they mostly ruled for very short periods. Partha and Samgramadeva could not remain on the throne for more than three and six months respectively. The wickedest of the Kashmir kings Unmattavant who ripped open the bellies of pregnant women to enjoy the fun belongs to this gloomy period. It is a tribute to the competence and ability of Didda that in the political confusion, moral decay and social degeneration. She could be at the helm of affairs for more than a half century of which she ruled the country for nearly twenty years in her own right. She entitles for respect and admiration.



Didda was well-versed in the arts of peace and war, She was a brave warrior and could organise armies and despatch them to fight her battles under command of men chosen by herself. In days of crisis when the realm was threatened with disintegration she assumed the leadership of the fighting forces. Appearing on the battlefield in person she directed the military operations and did not rest till victory was hers. Often she had to suppress subversive movements and on more than one occasion she had to quell rebellions of powerful elements. She was equally adept in the art of diplomacy and frequently utilised the machiavellian methods of divide and rule to the great advantage to the state.

At the termination of the hostilities she appropriately punished insurgents, rebels, intriguers and others enemies of the state; but in dealing with the vanquished foes she was never excessively or unnecessarily harsh.

Didda's first crime in the eyes of certain critics, including Kalhana, is that she declined to cremate herself as sati. This was looked upon as the height of unfaithfulness to departed husband in ancient and medieval ages. To the custodians of sacred tradition, however barbarous, this was intolerable. And when Didda having first declared to burn herself subsequently changed her mind in front of the funeral pyre at the intercession of Minister Narvahana, the great historian, probably reflecting the contemporary public opinion could not forgive her. But we, in the twentieth century see no ground to denounce her on this account.

It has rightly been said that she was a remarkable woman in many ways. She was a beautiful lady, with charming features but one physical defect; she was lame. But her physical handicap did not deter her from playing certain games she had a great fondness; on such occasions she was carried about on others' back. She was courageous, self-willed and full of determination. Never she did lose heart and kept her nerves even during the most trying times. She was not only intelligent but also shrewd and a good judge of the human nature. She showed a religious bent of mind, otherwise most of her time was spent in cruel, ruthless and unscrupulous deeds and detestable vices. She was uncommonly voluptuous, profligate and dissolute. Her lust for power was also limitless and so was the

case with her suspicious nature. Her rule was characterised by petty politics, intrigue, treachery, cruelty debauchery and murder. She misgoverned the unhappy for half a century. In spite of her all short comings she was able to ward off trouble which appeared again and again, and maintained her autocratic hold over the country unimpaired for an unusually long period. This shows that she was gifted with high political and diplomatic talents.

In spite of gross immorality and other defects of character queen Didda's claim of being one of the ablest sovereigns of the valley can hardly be denied. She came to the throne at a critical time. The greedy Brahmanas, unscrupulous landholders, conspiring nobles and even adventurers outside the realm had all joined their hands time and again to oust her. By bribing some and cajoling others, by wise and discriminating distribution of wealth and favour, she drove the enemy, she won the opponents, she steered clear the ship of state through storms and stresses. When once she fell into grief at the death of her son, her repentance found expression in numberless shrines and monasteries she erected.

A woman of her resolute nature and attainments would have distinguished herself in any age, more so in better times than those in which she lived. Not for nothing her people loved and admired her and desired to see her on the throne. A living proof of her popularity is that to this day the Kashmiri of all classes and communities use the epithet "Didda" (in modern common idiom *Ded*) for mother or any lady for whom they cherish highest regard and respect. This appellation is added to the honoured name of the saintly women dead or living in the valley.

Didda's rule is significant from yet another point of view "The share of woman, we may admit, was very limited in the administration of the country. The succession to thrones was confined to males, and as a consequence the history of the Aryan India does not furnish us with many names of female sovereigns. Sugandha and Didda of Kashmir, are the only female sovereigns who occupied any place in Indian history. But among these queens again Didda's is "the only instance in the history of ancient India," Days D.C. Sarkar,

“which furnishes us with a detailed account of the activities of a female ruler”.

Her ability as a statesman of high order is further attested to by her peaceful and undisputed transfer of power to a new dynasty of Samgramaraja the Lohara dynasty. She also had a wonderful capacity for organisation, which turned many a near defeats and failures into victories and successes.

The most damaging charge against Didda is her intimacy, admiration and affection for Tunga, the Gujjar (Khasha) youth. It is said that she had fallen in love with him and accepted him as a “paramour”. The charge does not bear validity. The queen must have fairly advanced in age passing through the half-way house of her life when she first met the sturdy, handsome young man. There is ample evidence to support the view that Didda was not only fascinated by the fair looks and bodily beauty of Tunga but was also impressed with his robust common-sense. “Women even though born in high families become the enjoyment of the vulgar”. Tunga’s record of achievements in civil administration and military exploits was praiseworthy. He maintained high position not through the patronage of the queen, even after the death of queen Didda. Tunga continued to discharge the responsibility of high office for many years under the succeeding regimes is an ample proof that he was a capable person.

### **KING SAMGRAMARAJA**

(A.D. 1003—1028)

Samgramaraja was selected for the throne of Kashmir by queen Didda in her life time as has been mentioned already who now became the founder for the Lohara dynasty. He was weak and prudent and did not care for the administration of the state. Most of the ministers and dignitaries had now died but the most notable dignity who continued to live was Tunga, the Gujjar (Kashka Prime Minister). He became supreme in power. He sacked all his rivals. He (the king) had a talented queen Sri Leikha who was available to the king as adviser. It is due to this queen that Samgramaraja was able to rule the land without any internal disturbances or invasion from outside. The king was anxious to enter into matrimonial



alliances with the people of low rank, thereby to strengthen his position. He married his daughter Lothika to Preman, a Brahman superintendent of Didda Matha (Didiamar) who was rich, courageous and man of actions. At the same time he took care not to arouse any suspicion in the mind of Tunga. Sri Leikha had taken this a revolutionary step. The king has worked to throw off his (Tunga) guard. Pretending to have full confidence in him. He left his whole administration in his hands. In the words of Doctor Saxena. Samgamaraja was a helpless spectator of the affairs around him and could do nothing in consideration of the sacred vow taken by him earlier. In sheer desperation the king resigned his subjects to their faith and his duties of the State to Tunga and gave himself up to a life of ease and pleasure. But at the same time Kalhana admits that it was contracted by the king to "secure assistance".

Samgamaraja was a shrewd politician. Soon after his daughter's (Lothika) marriage, the community of the valley which had representatives in the king's council was enraged and wanted to bring about the fall of Tunga met in the shrine at Parihaspur (modern Paraspur) and started a solemn fast. The fast was a serious affair and the Government of the date has to attend to it immediately. The king made an earnest attempt at breaking it but failed. A stage came in the course of negotiations when some of the Brahmans demanded even the king's removal, but insisted on the expulsion only of the Prime Minister and this demand was conceded by all, including the king, his subjects and even by Tunga himself. After some time, one more demand was put forth before the king by the fasting Brahmans. They had picked up the dead body of a fellow Brahman from a well and announced that it was killed by Tunga and wanted to cremate in the Prime minister's house itself. They marched in procession but fell out with Tunga's men on account of some unknown reasons. Swords were freely used and some of Brahmans lost their lives, some fled. Some were imprisoned and some were exiled and in this way the agitation fizzled out.

While the priests, nobles and ministers were fighting each other and the royal officers teasing the citizens a new drama was being enacted on the north western borders

of India. Sultan Mohammad the ruler of Ghazni whom Kalhana calls Hammira was carrying on operation against the kingdoms situated in northern India. The most formidable barrier towards the progress of the Ghaznavides was the kingdom of the Sahis. Several attempts were made by him to conquer it. According to Muslim chroniclers during the early years of eleventh century, Sultan Mohammad inflicted defeats on the prince of Udbhaddha. It was in 1013 A.D. when the Shahi ruler Trilochanapala was the ruler and Sultan made an attack on his territory. According to Nizamuddin and Firisht Trilochanpal then retired to Kashmir, and sought assistance of Samagamaraja.

In compliance with Shahi request, Tunga was sent by the king of Kashmir at the head of large army to help Shahi king against Hammira i.e. Mohammad of Ghazni. Tunga did not listen to the words of the Shahi ruler. He committed a blunder by crossing the river Tausi or Tohi river near Punch, attacked a small detachment sent by Hammira. When attacked by Afgans, the army of Tunga fled from the field in utter confusion. With the remnant of his shattered forces he returned to Kashmir. On his return to the valley Tunga was greatly disgraced and highly demoralized. The conspirators who had formerly raised a rebellion now found an opportunity to shunt him out. The king who was weak and indolent by nature had deep hatred for Tunga. Instigated by his brother Vighraja, he now began to look for an opportunity to remove him. Finally one day the unsuspected Tunga was invited by the king Samgamaraja in his royal palace with a small number of followers. Hardly they had entered when the conspirators who were hiding in the rear, fell upon them. One of Tunga's attendants tried to intervene, he was killed. They were struck dumb with fear and surprise. The heads of Tunga and his son were cut off and thrown outside the palace. It so happened that on hearing of his master's treacherous murder a few of Tunga's followers made for the palace in hot haste and put many of them to the sword. The king also ran away and was given a chase and had to flee from one apartment to other. But not satisfied with this, king's army plundered the deceased minister's residence. Thus ended the career of a man 'who had ruled the

roost for a long time', but whose conduct had all along been loyal and free from treachery.

Shortly after the death of Tunga—Sultan Mohammad made an attempt to conquer the valley. Though the pages of Rajatarangni are silent regarding the details of this attempted invasion a passage is preserved by Kalhana who speaks of the cowardly conduct of the sons of low born Candramukha, "who on being sent by the king to fight with Afgans, turned, fled and again came back to their own country". For a detailed description, we have to turn to the muslim historians. According to Firihta Mohammad in the year A.H. 406 revisited Kashmir with his army in order to punish some rebellious chiefs and to besiege some forts which he had not reduced in his former expedition. One of these forts was Loharkot or Lohara, situated not far from the Tosamaidan pass. The fort of Loharkot is known as Barbal at present. And it stood in the way and thus the invasion became failure. Alberuni the great historian was present and observes that "After a while when the snow began to fall and cold became intensively chilly and the enemy received re-inforcement from Kashmir." The Sultan was obliged to return to Ghazni. His attempt to conquer Kashmir in the early 11th Century was ended in a failure.

The king's last years were saddened by the unworthy conduct of his own wife, Srilekha whom he loved ardently. She had enjoyed bodily comforts and companionship of colourful persons of the court. She has been accused of having two paramours Tribhavan and Jayakara, both courtiers of the king. She was a talented and wise lady, and was recipient of innumerable precious gifts at the hands of the king through which she was able to amass enormous wealth. At several centres in the valley she had founded her own gonjas (Treasures) of which that at Mayagrama (present Manigam) in Ganderbal Tehsil was the biggest. With the help of the coffers Srilekha relieved the destitute of their suffering and distress when they approached her royal camp during extensive tours—in the country side which she undertook. She built two monasteries for the benefit of monks, ascetics and nuns, one in the name of her son Hariraja. His daughter Lothika is credited to have built Lothi-ka-Matha, a massive edifice in the suburbs of Srinagar which is mentioned to have been destroyed by Sri



Leikha, the queen when her husband's brother Vighraharaja swooped down upon Srinagar through Madavarajyya, (south of Kashmir now known as Maraz) and appeared on the outskirts of the capital within two and a half days after her husband's death (Samgamaraja). During her regency when he (Vighraharaja) wanted to depose Anantdev (infant). He had captured Lothika Matha and the queen set fire to the entire structure, and reduced it to ashes and those who had collected outside fled away and Vighraharaja was defeated.

Soon after the removal of Tunga, political condition of the kingdom worsened and there was no improvement in the administration but it became weak. Muslim ruler of the north (Dardistan) and the Damaras of Karamrajyya (Kamraz) had become unruly and predominant in the court.

Samgamaraja became restless on account of oppressive conduct of his officials towards his subjects but was helpless. They amassed fortunes through corrupt activities and in order to earn religious merit they laid foundations of a number of shrines and temples in the valley. Samgramaraja appointed Naga as the chief of the army staff who had been the architect in the conspiracy against Tunga. Bhadreshwar, a son of a vegetable gardener became now the chief minister. Sometimes past he had adopted the calling of a butcher and fuel vendor. He acted as P.A. to Tunga. He plundered the treasury of Bhuteshwar temple (Wangat) and Kapteshwar (Kothyar) Anantnag District. Another officer Matanga fleeced the people and filled up the royal treasury. Chandramukha had made riches through illegal means. His three sons Nana, Bhaga and Nandimukha were appointed as commanders, Parthas a companion of Tunga was made City perfect. But he was a wicked person and he committed slaughter and other sins on the holy platform of the Linga of Shiva at the-Pravaresa temple of Srinagar.

Srileikha till the last day of her life was intent upon suppress in less-majestie. Ananta attained majority and was capable enough to assume the rulership of the land She had grown very old. She had no more any desire to enjoy power and was happy to relinquish the authority and retire to a life of seclusion and worship.

Sangramaraja passed away in 1028 A.D. Sometime before his death he had appointed his eldest son Hariraja as the heir apparent and given him the bath of coronation. The new king was a good and generous man ; the ruling chiefs and the feudatories adored him, but he had ruled for twenty two days only and died on the bright day of Asadha. There was great joy and enthusiasm among the subjects when he ascended the throne and established peace and order in the kingdom. Theft and dacoity disappeared from the kingdom. There was a general report in the kingdom that the queen mother Srilekha who was dissatisfied with his rule caused his death but Kalhana tells us that it was unconfirmed rumour. The charge appears to have originated from the fact that immediately after the sudden death of Hariraja the queen-mother announced her desire to ascend the throne for herself. But Srilekha's plan was spoiled by her powerful opponents among whom was her foster brother, Sagara, who conspired to foil her plans. Unaware of the hostile group, Srilekha completed the paraphernalia for the coronation but when on the auspicious day she was having the ceremonial bath, Ekangas, the royal bodyguards, crowned Ananta the queen's infant son, in another part of the palace. Realising that any resistance would give birth to a destructive civil war, Srilekha smilingly accepted the fait accompli and consented to be the regent of the infant-king. Taking advantage of the dissensions in the royal family, Vigaharaja, a brother of Sangramaraja and ruler of Lohara arrived at the capital of Kashmir (Srinagar) with a large force to depose Ananta. But the troops of Kashmir routed him with his followers as mentioned above. For years afterwards in that capacity (as regent) she managed the state of affairs and played a prominent part as a ruling queen.

### KING ANANT DEV (1028-1063 A.D.)

Anant Dev was magnanimous, kind and brave. He was proficient in the arts of peace and war. He successfully led armies on the battlefield and having humbled the enemies he generally forgave them. His early years of reign were marked by the rising of the Damaras, headed by the rebel comman-

der-in-chief Tribhubana was successfully defeated by Ananta. An invasion of the ruler of Daradistan Acalamangala and seven meleccha (Muslim) kings allied with him was similarly defeated with a help of the Sahi prince Rudrapals, one of the Sahi princes married the daughter of the Jalamdhara (Kangra) king Inducandre, while king Ananta was induced to marry Suryamati, a youngerr daughter of the same king. Sahi princes were the rulers of Udabhadpura, had now taken shelter in the valley. They were Anangpal, Diddapa and Rudrapal. King Ananta Dev welcomed them with open arms and rather fixed fabulous sums as their allowances. They were driven away by the armies of the Mohammad Gazni. The meleccha allies of the Daradistan King apparently denote tribal leaders living on the frontier of Kashmir who had now accepted Islam by this time. King Ananta's Victory over the Darads and their allies is also fully discussed by Bilhana in Vikramankadevacarita. He (Bilhana) uses the term saka in place of melecha (Muslim) which may indicate that the melecch or converted Muslim princes were originally Sakas. Islamic influence became much more marked in his court. Shahi prince were planning, "the breaking up of golden statues of Gods".

When Rudrapala and other Sahi princes died soon the queen Suryamati intervened in the affairs of the State and brought and subdued the turbulent nobles and mischief mongers who often disturbed the peace of the kingdom, "with unimpeachable heroism and undiminished valour." As already mentioned the chief of Dardistan dispatched secretly a muslim army contingent to support the rebellious factions in the kingdom but the king defeated them and restored peace and order in his dominions. Now peace and tranquillity had been settled in the kingdom and the king had to face the most unfortunate tragic event in his life. The royal couple lost their handsome prince while he was quite young. This upset them and they were filled with shock and gave up their residence at the palace and took their abode in a hut near the temples of Sada Shiva. This temple is still extant on the left bank of Jhelum 50 yards below present Habba Kadal bridge and had been founded by the queen. The locality was known as Soila Shipur and now Purshyar. Kalhana informs us that from this day



onwards to his own day the Kings of Kashmir abandoning the residence of former royal dynasties made their residence in that very place. (Habba kadal are a on the left bank). It became a usage with them which they could not contravene.

As everywhere under the feudal system of government, Kashmir did not have any regular defence forces ; each feudal lord was expected to have a specified contingent under him ready for the service of liege lord. But experience of the insurrections taught Ananta to be more methodical and he, for the first time in the history of Kashmir, organised an army and paid it regularly from state treasury.

Ananta Dev was a spend-thrift and squandered wealth on luxurious living. He was a great lover of tambula leaf (Pan) and betel nut which is not grown in Kashmir, and was imported from outside. Gay parties were frequently held on extensive scale in the palace and elsewhere when the king enjoyed tambula leaf in the company with other merry makers. Enormous sums were spent on such revelries that formed part of the riotous gatherings. The constant need of the leaves and nuts brought the king under the baneful influence of one Padmaraja, a foreign Pan magnate, who cleverly appropriated almost the entire revenue of the kingdom on account of the supply of luxury goods. Having exhausted the coffers, Ananta Dev gradually sold his jewellery but could not control his pernicious habit. The matters came to such a pass that he pawned even "the crown decorated with five crescents as well as the lion-throne" for the money which he had to pay to Padma.

Ananta Dev came more and more under the influence of his queen Suryamati, who was also known by the name of Subhata. He was plunging headlong in debts due to his extravagant habits. His relief came when the queen took full charge of the royal affairs. She had all along been admonishing and persuading him to give up his ruinous ways but to no purpose. The matters worsened and the honour and dignity of the crown and the throne were at stake and she had to intervene. The two emblems of royalty were required for use in the Hall of Audience on auspicious occasions. They had to be fetched on monthly ceremonial days from the house of the creditor. It occasioned disgrace for every member of the ruling family ;

the queen had to hang her head in shame at the very thought of the royal insignia being in the possession of a foreign trader. She was violently shaken; she had arrived at a turning point in her career.

The queen overruled the king for the first time and forbade the holding of gala parties; she took drastic steps to restore sobriety and unity in the court circles. She paid Padmaraja out of her own treasury and having secured the crown and the throne ordered his externment from the valley as also that of another foreigner, Dallaka, a jester through whom the king had been robbed of his wealth. Thereafter the queen applied her undivided mind to the problems facing the country. First of all she prepared plans for reform and reconstruction; she spent all her private treasure on the welfare of the people; she bent her energies to eradicate corruption and to purify the administration of many evils. He was reduced to a mere figurehead and had to carry out the orders of the energetic queen. Kalhana informs us, "from that time onwards it was the queen who applied herself to the affairs of state while the king having ceased to talk about his exploits was content to carry on what had to be done".

Haladhara, a Vaisya, was a favourite of the queen and due to her favour he rose to the position of prime-minister. He proved to be a successful and capable administrator and secured for a time peace and prosperity for the valley. The queen restored the financial equilibrium and afterwards turned her attention to redress the manifold grievances of the people. To meet his growing wants, Anantadeva was always in need of more and more money. Experienced and wise ministers had refused to fleece people beyond their capacity. The king had, therefore appointed men of low culture and mean birth to high posts of responsibility. A barber guided the king in levying unknown imposts and taxes on the people, An ordinance was promulgated which made it compulsory on everyone to declare his savings; the quality and value of gold had to be recorded to enable the authorities to exact one-twelfth as the king's share. While making the entries and the assessments, the government officials plundered the citizens and molested their wives. Suryamati effected changes not only in the regulations but also in the personnel of the state machinery. She

dismissed the incapable and cruel upstarts, imprisoned the guilty and executed some whose heinous crimes were proved and brought home to them, As already noted above Haldar was appointed as her prime-minister who had been loyal, devoted and diligent and under the guidance of queen, he was able to introduce reforms in several departments and chances of harassments of the citizens were minimised. Haldhara reconquered certain neighbouring territories under the sovereignty of Kashmir which had during the days of civil war and mal-administration, declared their independence.

### **Queen's foundations**

Now that there was peace and order prevailing in the land and economic conditions of the people had been improved, the queen started the construction of public buildings in the tradition of the great rulers of the past. She founded Gaurishvar temple and erected on the bank of Jhelum the holy Surmatha which is identified in the vicinity of present day Habba-kadal, in mohalla Shalayar known as Sudmar. It was destroyed as Kalhana says, due to fire which broke out at Sodashipur (Purshiyar) which while subsequently crossing Jhelum destroyed Surmatha temple with the neighbouring parts of the city also. This matha was established for the residence of the students. I infer very much that it is today's Sumyar locality and the word Sudhmar has become corrupt through the passage of time. At the time of construction of Sodashiv temple in present Purshyar locality (Habakadal). The queen Suryamati (Subhata) made huge gifts of cows, horses, gold precious stones and the like. In the name of her younger brother Ashachandra she built a matha and attached an agrahara to it; in the name of her another brother Sillana and of her husband the pious lady constructed two monasteries in the vicinity of Vijeshawar (Vijbror) and Amereshavara (a shrine situated at the site marked now by the Village Amburher about six miles to the north of Srinagar on the road toward Ganderbal). At the same time she presented at the sacred town of Vijayeshwara (Vijbror), one hundred and eight agaraharas to learned Brahmins. In the name of her husband she bestowed agarahas and provided for the endowments of Trshula, and Bo-nalinga (different forms of Shiva).



After she became the fullfledged ruler of the valley she thought of aggressive wars on neighbouring territories which she wanted to bring under her subjugation. With that idea into consideration, she organized a huge army fully equipped with armour and other requirements. Now since she was capable to control the administration she deputed Anantdev at the head of the army on an expedition of conquest. Premier Halder, was incharge of the army and commanded to accompany it. The first victim of aggression was Raja-Sala of Champa-modern Chamba in Himachal-pradesh.

He was uprooted and a new prince of Ananta's choice was placed on the throne. Sala is mentioned as Salavahanadeva is mentioned in the chamba copper plates and the new king raised to the throne, was probably the latter's son. If Bilhana is to be believed, in addition to Chamba his supermacy was acknowledged by the hill states of Darvabhsara Trigarta and Bhartula all in southern Jammu. But in Vallapura (modern Billawar) in the east of Jammu, the Kashmir armies suffered heavily. But for the heroism of Haldhara, the war would have ended in the king's defeat. He did not fare better at Urasa (present day Hazara district of Malakand agency), north Pakistan. The passage was blocked by the enemy and it was with great difficulty and the timely assistance of the Commander-in-Chief that Anantdev could make an ignominious retreat. (Vikraam-ankadevwa carita-Bilhana).

Through the good offices of Padma, Anantdev had acted incidently as agent to king Bhoja of Malwa so well known for literature. King Bhoja had special regard for Kashmirian sacred Tirthas of which is the most important Kapatishwar, which is modern Kother (Anantnagh Tehsil), the water of which had to be supplied to him regularly in bottles in distant Malwa. He had the tank constructed round the Tirtha, King Bhoja had vowed that he would always wash his face in water from the Papa-Sudhana Tirtha and this man made the fulfillment of this vow possible by receiving bottles (glass jars) filled with that water.

*Note :* The king Bhoja of Malwa was dis-figured by horns which had grown on his head and had in vain sought relief by visits to numerous sacred Tirthas when near Kaptesvar (Kother) he noticed a wounded dog was healed by entering

the water of the sacred spring, The king followed his example and got rid of his horns. There upon he testified his gratitude by construction of the tank. To the same king is ascribed the erection of temple in the usual Kashmiri style of modest dimension, situated to the east of the tank and the ruins are still found there.

Hostile elements inside Kashmir were waiting for an opportunity to rise against the monarchy. In Kramarayya now (Kamraz) or North Kashmir, the Damaras raised a rebellion against the king. Queen Suryamati defeated them one by one and laid her hands upon the efficient administration. Haldara had demoralized the enemies of the royal house by annihilating them. The disloyal sections had deemed it advisable to lie low and again wait for an opportunity to raise their heads. Spreading false and unfounded rumours to discredit the men in power has ever been the first weapon in the armoury of rebels in Kashmir. Currency was given to report that Haldhara had betrayed the king which necessitated to retreat the Kashmir forces from Hazara. Giving credence to the rumour Asha Chander brother of the queen got the premier arrested and imprisoned. But Suriyamati instituted an enquiry—it was found that Haldara was innocent and has been victimized because of vindictiveness. He was honourably acquitted, released and re-instated again as premier. The differences between the councillors was resolved and the queen speedily brought the rowdy Damara clique to their knees.

Ananta had been the ruler of Kashmir for 35 years and had grown old, weak and feeble in body. Suriyamati the queen prevailed upon Ananta to abdicate in favour of his son Kalashdev . . . thinking that she would protect and safeguard the royal dynasty during her life time. But soon he came to regret his step and his diplomatic and far-sighted minister Haldara who probably assessed the real worth of this prince did not approve this suggestion but the queen remained adamant and instructed chamberlain Ranaditya to go ahead with the preparations for the coronation. In October—November 1063 A.D. (on the sixth day of the bright half of Kartika) in the year of the Loukika era, four thousand. Kalash was thus

sprinkled with the sacred water and crowned as King of Kashmir.

## KALASHADEV

(1063-1089 A.D.)

The queen had entertained great hopes in Kalashdev but she was disappointed when he ascended the throne. He proved a worthless ruler. He lacked the qualities of a good ruler and an able administrator. He was not acquainted with arts and principles of statesmanship and secrets of diplomacy. Kalsha's parents were responsible for this affair. Anantdev did not allow him a free hand to govern and under the instigation of certain ministers he retained power in his own hands and this was why Kalsha remained a mere figure head. The state of affairs were such that the old king Anantdev nominated Utkarshadev second son of Kalash as king, a toddler born of princess Ramlekha. The queen felt jealous of the pomp and show of her daughter-in-law on becoming the queen, wore more fashionable dresses and costly jewellery. The royal house was now divided and signs of disorder were now visible. Suriyamati invited Jinduraja, a resourceful brave man to form the government. At this time the great Lord of Devegom (Kapalmochan area) Tehsil Shopian was a headache to the Government. He had often raised rebellion against the rulers. This chief, the one-eyed Shobha had been killed by the combined forces of the king. Jinduraja's success in dealing with the internal disturbances paved the way for his promotion to the more responsible position of Minister of war. In the capacity of the commander-in-Chief he conquered Rajapuri (Rajuri) and forced the chief of that area to pay an annual tribute. Jinduraja soon became an eye sore and no one detested him more than the ailing Haldhara. After an enquiry conducted by Anantadeva at the suggestion of Haldhara Jinduraja was arrested and disarmed by one of the trusted commanders, Bijja. The disorder and civil strike became the order of the day. The court was filled with mutual suspicions, jealousies and hatreds.

In the mean while king Kalasha Dev had removed his residential Palace from Habba Kadal area and had laid the



foundation of a new city near Jayavana modern Zevan 6 miles in the east of Srinagar. The king had built here great many houses for the residential purposes for his subjects and his Ministers. Rows of Mathas, great many Agraharas, and many buildings with fine tanks and gardens were built by him. The importance of this new city of Zevan grew very much and it became a trading and a pilgrimage centre during eleventh and twelfth centuries. As already mentioned the great diety Tukshaka Naga was worshipped here from times immomerial here. Abul Fazl when he paid a visit to this place later on says that both Muslims and Hindus prayed at this shrine.

Meanwhile, King Kalsha had fallen in bad company and was descending into the mire of immorality by resorting to "caddish ways and by committing shameless deeds". He accepted the guidance of a certain Pramada Kantha, an unscrupulous and ill-reputed Guru (Brahman priest), who did not hesitate to approach even his own daughter for sexual intercourse. A lowbred man, Chanka, whose nose had been cut off in a mid-night drunken orgy, was appointed a minister and given the title of Thakkura (petty chief). Kalsha engaged five procurers and paid them lavishly for the purpose of enticing handsome girls to satisfy his sexual passions. It is said that most of the women had been procured by a muslim servant of his court.

He had a company of rogues, rascals and bad-characters. The youthful king sunk deep in the immoral actions. He forsook all sense of decency and jumped over the confines of moderation. Nothing remained in his eyes as sacred. He even approached to the sister of Anantdev and her daughter Naga with ill intentions. Afraid of the public gaze the king accompanied by a gang of wicked men roamed from house to house under cover of darkness in search of beautiful women. One night he went to meet the daughter-in-law of Jinduraja but Chandal guards who were posted outside the residence caught him redhanded, then a brawl followed in the course of which blows with clenched fists were hurled at him and he was rescued by his personal staff. Haldara died at Chakdara (modern Sumthen Village) Bijbihara and advised the king at his death bed, "do not undertake hastily reckless expeditions

against foreign countries. I had to avert your disaster in Vallapura (Billawar) and elsewhere by cunning."

Soon after Suryamati and Anantadev came to know of the scuffle with the Chadala guards and prompted them to act hastily. So says Kalhana "Both having wept long for the son through love woven with shame and sorrow made a resolution to imprison him who had been guilty. Anantadev pleaded to place their grandson Harshadev on the throne. Kalasha was summoned in the court to answer for his mis-deeds. When Kalash was brought face to face to the king—the king slapped him on his face and ordered him to give up his dagger, the emblem of sovereignty. But Suriyamati had affection for her son which disabled her to take any action against his son. She taunted the old king for being so harsh. Anantadev personally went to Kalsha's room in order to arrest him. But was opposed by Kalshadev's young partisons. Anantdev was dejected and left for Vijayeshwera (modern Vijbror)—Bijbihara. Then followed civil war between father and son. All good works which had been achieved by Suryamati during the three decades, were destroyed. It undermined the foundations of the state and ruined the economic and social life of the citizen. Vijyashwar town was burnt and raised to the ground. Even the ancient important shrines were raised to the ground. Suriyamati always lived with Anantdev but had sided with her son forgetting his criminal behaviour. Anantadev was more popular among his subjects—and commanded great influence and respect. The State treasury full of priceless jewels, precious stones, gold and other valuables were in his possessions and carried to Vijyashwara. His departure for Vijabror (Bijbihara) dealt a severe blow to the prestige of Kalash and the reputation of the Government. When he had hardly reached Pampur, the young king and his cosort requested him to return. Suriyamati prevailing upon Anantadev, the latter agreed but after some time he did not see any change in his son and acted on his previous resolve. This time he took away horses, arms, armour and other moveable possessions and then stopped for a short while on the Banks of Jhelum—to wait his queen. The royal ladies loaded their boats with their possession of all kinds and departing did not leave even iron nails behind in their rooms. The entire wealth of the state was

thus concentrated at Vijbroar (Bijbihara). The dignitaries, Ministers and nobles followed Ananta and made their residence in that town. Cavaliers, men-at arms—Rajputras and notable Damaras fixed their residence in the neighbourhood of Vijbror (Bijbihara).

Srinagar became a deserted city. And Vijbror was humming with activity. It proved an affective punishment for king Kalsha—more than his de-thronement applied himself to affect changes in the government. He appointed now capable men in the government. And prepared plans for uplifting the social and economic conditions of the masses. He inviting scholars and wisemen to advise him in the matters of the state. He encouraged trade and commerce, and stablized the shattered economy of the State. He now got loans from wealthy traders and having won over the infantry to his side, he determined to take revenge of his father. He led an army among the Command of Vijja—and started operation from the head quarters at Awantipur but on the contrary cavalry and Damara chiefs were loyal and devoted to Ananatadev. He released Jinduraja from prison and made him the chief of the army staff. Preparations of war were afoot and the people were terrified. Suriyamati could not tolerate this state of affairs, she begged her husband for armistice for two days and despatched her faithful emissaries, Maya and other Brahmans to Kalashdev to disist from acting disloyally. Young king agreed and had nothing to fear from the retired old man. Suryamati had argued that Ananatdev had abdicated. Kalshdev retreated to Srinagar. But both father and son looked each other with fear and suspicion. Ananatadev was still thinking of snatching away Kalsha of the powers and privileges of kingship because he knew that his son was inefficient, immoral and treacherous. He had once even summoned Harshdev to Vijbror (Bijbihara). Kalash had come to know of this plan and avoided the detectives and presented himself before Ananatadev at Bijbihara.

Rajtilak ceremoney was performed and Harshadev was declared as lawful king of Kashmir. In this way Kalsha Deva's position was weakned. There was now confusion and chaos in the state and the people were put into abject conditions. Seeing this miserable plight of the people, the leading Brahmans of



the Valley resorted to the age old practice of hunger strike or fast, in order to bring father and son together to patch up their differences. Anantdev agreed and the royal couple forgave Kalasha and returned to Srinagar to live in the royal palace. The reconciliation ended very soon. Kalsha had deep malice against his parents and was planning to imprison them. Anantdev was warned by his men and after 70 days stay in Srinagar, left again for Vijayeshwara (Vijbror). Kalsha started to harm his father in the first instance by burning stacks of hay, for his horses and killed number of infantry men.

Anantdev's departure made Kalsha very furious and angry. It was very difficult for Kalsha to defeat his father since the latter possessed wealth and respect. He could enlist support for the masses at any time. He now entertained a new-fangled idea and employed his men to set fire to the flourishing town of Vijayeshwara (Vijbror) on all sides. It was the biggest fire ever recorded in the history of Kashmir. The magnificent ancient historic city with its numerous grand edifices palaces, temples, viharas and thousands of dwelling was reduced to ashes. Anantdev's entire wealth was destroyed in fire. Within a span of few hours wealthy nobles and grandies who were well to do persons faced dire poverty so much so that Kalahana records that some princes could not hide their nakedness, in the night. Next morning Anantdev's queen found a jewelled lingam in the Debris and sold it to a trader of the family of Takas, for seventy lakhs. Takka family is now known as Tak they are converts to Islam and I find a family of Takas at Vijbor and Islamabad (Anantnag) and are rich traders. They enjoyed considerable influence and reputation until recent times. She purchased the necessities of life. Vijbror was a prosperous town so much so that when the heaps of ashes were searched property worth millions was secured in the shape of lumps of gold, other precious metals and jewels under it.

Kalsha compelled his father to leave Vijayeshwara and proceed to Lohara (Poonch). He also wanted him to leave the sanctuary of Vijayeshwara and go out side his homeland and that the queen agreed reluctantly. This was the last blow that Anantdev could endure, he straight away took his dagger and plunged into his onus. The wound proved fatal and caused his instantaneous death. In October 1081 A.D. the

poor king died in front of the image of Vijayeshwara. Shocked by the rash deed of her husband, Suryamati now displayed virtues of serenity and fortitude in face of the biggest misfortune that befell her in life. The first thing she did after her husband's death was to disburse the salaries and allowances of all officials and soldiers. She now appointed one hundred warriors for his sons guard. The queen placed her husbands mortal remains in an elegantly decorated palanquin which was carried on their shoulders by the princes of the realm which befitted the late monarch. She waited for her son Kalsha who would come from Srinagar. Indeed thousands of residents of Srinagar poured in Vijbror and the dead body was placed on the sandal wood scented funeral pyre and burned herself along with it in the flames. Gangadhara, Takkibuddha the palanquin-bearer Dandaka and maids Udda, Nonika and Valga joined her on the funeral pyre.

Kalasa's character changed for the better following his parents death and devolution on him of responsibilities on assumption of full regal powers. After effecting a solemn reconciliation with his son Harsa, the king set about to improve the administration of the kingdom and by a wise and shrewd control over the state budget removed the financial stringency which had resulted from uncertain political conditions and civil war. Jayananda was the Prime Minister, Varah dev was the lord of the gate of Votur (near present Vernagh.) He was thus able to make some rich endowments. He used to move about incognito over his kingdom and had thus a first hand knowledge of the living conditions of his subjects. He punished corrupt officials and restored the confidence of the people in the government. In this way he was ably assisted by capable minister like Vaman and the great Kandarpa, the commander of the frontier defences. There was peace and prosperity following these measures, enable Kalasa to send expeditions in the neighbouring regions. Seizing the opportunity of a civil war in Rajapura between Samgramapala and his uncle Madanpala he intervened in the affairs and established the suzerainty of Kashmir over the hill state. Urasa (Hazara, Malakand agency) was next invaded, and commander of the Kashmir army after crossing the river Kisanganga (now Neelam river) seized the government, together with the heads



of horses of its ruler named Abhaya. In the winter of the year 1087-88, Kalsha's foreign policy was demonstrated when he held an assembly in his capital of the rulers of eight hill states around Kashmir, from Ursa (Hazara) in the west and to Kastavata (Kishtwar) in the east. They paid allegiance to their Kashmirian overlord. There were Asata the chief of Campa (Chamba) in Himachal Pradesh, Kalasa the ruler of Vallapura (Billawar Jammu) Sangrampala the chief of Rajauri, Utkarsa, the ruler of Lohara (Pounch) Sangata, the king of Ursa (Hazara), Gambhirasha, the chief of Kanda (Kangra) and Uttamaraja the ruler of Kastavata (Kish war) and Kiriti the chief of Baddhapura (Nilpura) whose daughter was married to Kalsha, and other chiefs attended this assembly.

Prince Harsha could not pull on well along with his father and induced by some evil advice conspired to dethrone him. The conspiracy leaked out. Kalasa attempted to obtain from his son a repudiation of the plot but failing that ordered his arrest. Kalhana tells us that the conduct of his son had a telling effect on the character of Kalsha who reverted to his old licentious life. Kalsha proceeded to the temple of Martand in great torments where he died after vainly endeavouring to see once more the imprisoned Harsha (1089).

In the reign of Kalsha (1063-1089 A.D.) there flourished a great poet Bilhana who was senior to Kalhana in point of age. He was born at Khunmuh or Khunamush, 6 miles from Srinagar. His father was Jyestha Kalsha, a learned Brahman noted specially for his studies in sanskrit grammar. Bilhana was third son of Jyestha. On completing his education and finding no scope for his talents and on account of oppressive rule of Kalsha Bilhana at the age of sixteen set out of his wanderings in quest of fame and fortune. The places which he visited were Mathura, Kanyakubja, Prayaga, and Varanasi. At the Court of Krsna of Dahala, he stayed for sometime and probably wrote a poem in honour of Rama. On leaving Dahala the poet visited Western India, attracted by the fame of the courts of Dhara and Anhilwad and the sanctity of Somnath Pathan. For some reason not stated, he did not go to Bhoja of Dhara. After spending sometime at Anhilwad, Bilhana embarked from there for southern India and visited Rameshvaram. On his way back he reached the court of



Kalyana where the Calukya king Vikramaditya VI Tribhuvan-malla (A.D. 1076-1127) admired him and made him his Vidya-pati. From the last verses of the *Vikramankadevacarita* it appears that latterly he fell into disfavour with Vikramaditya VI and had to leave his kingdom. Does it account for the incomplete narrative of Bilhana which stops with Vikramaditya's chola war and never refers to his activities beyond the Narmada in 1088 ?

The *Vikramankadevacarita* is a poem of 18 cantos which glorifies king Vikramaditya Tribhuvanamalla of Kalyana. It opens with an eulogistic account of the Calukya dynasty. Then the exploits of king Vikramaditya's father are described at some length. At the end the poet comes to Vikramaditya VI and depicts with usual amplifications the conquests of Vikramaditya before his accession to the throne, his dethronement of his elder brother Somesvara II, his defeat and capture of his younger brother and his numerous wars with the faithless cholas. Though Bilhana has taken a historical theme for his subject-matter, his work, in all its essentials, is a *kavya* and not a history.

When Bilhana revived his desire to return to Kashmir, Harsha Dev deposed Kalash. Tradition has it that he returned to his village Khunmuh and died there at the age of 80. But there is no effective evidence to substantiate this claim. Bilhana's language is simple and clear. He gives beautiful glimpse of the Srinagar of his day in *Shalokas* of the 8th chapter of his *Vikramankadevacharita* on the adventures of Vikrama.

Another great prolific scholar and a great litterateur who flourished during this period was Ksemendra who was born on the Dal in the locality where the Nishat Bagh is situated, in the days of Anantdev. He was born in a well-to-do family. His father's name was Prakasendra and grandfather's name was Sindhu. By birth he was a Shaivite but laterly, under the teaching of Somacharya Bhagaval, he became Vaisnavita. His literary career runs from 1037 to 1066 A.D. Ksemendra's studies were wide extending to Hindu Law, Sanskrit Grammar, politics, music and painting. He knew carpentry and smithy by the time he was 25 years of age. Then he married. Anantdev engaged him to teach his son Kalash.

Ksemendra was noted for his learning and wealth, his sagacity and generosity in maintaining boarding schools.

Ksemendra is silent about the date of his birth. But he says in his *Bharata-manjari* that he studied literature with Abhinavagupta, author of the *Vidyavivrti* or the *Pratyabhijñā-Vrhativimarsini*. As Abhinavagupta composed his famous commentary on *Pratyabhijñā* philosophy in A.D. 1014 it is apparent that Ksemendra was born much earlier. His *Dasavataracarita* was composed in the Laukika year 4141 or A.D. 1066. Probably he lived a little longer.

Ksemendra was a versatile genius. He wrote poems, narratives, didactic and satiric sketches and treatises on rhetoric and prosody. He had a thorough knowledge of mathematics, astrology, medicine, surgery, politics, erotics, and Buddhist philosophy. Ksemendra says that he left the company of dry logicians and grammarians but studied all the lexicons of his time. He was particularly fond of songs, gathas, novels and interesting concepts of poetry.

During the later years of Anantdev's reign, he was bestowed a jagir in the present village Khondur which is named after him in *maraz* (Anantnagh district), near Achabal moghal garden.

Another poet and scholar of repute who flourished during 11th century was Mammatabhat. He was second son of the scholar Jaiyatabhat. He hailed from Gailandar near Pampur (noted for Saffron). Mammatabhatt was the most distinguished of all the scholars of this time. He followed Abhinavagupta.

Mammatabhatt seem to have been a later contemporary of Ksemendra. He refers to Abhinavagupta, Mahimabhatta and king Bhoja and as such must have lived in or about A.D. 1050. Though a native of Kashmir, he took his early education at Benares. He was a Shaiva by faith and was also a staunch supporter of grammarian school.

Mammata was not only a compiler, he was a critic too. He champions the theory of *dhvani* and attacks the views of Bhamaha, Bhattodbhata, Vamana, Rudrata, Mahimabhatta and others. Rajanaka Ananda, in his commentary, says that Mammata wrote up to *parikara alamkara* and the remaining portion was written by Allata. The *Kavyaprakasa* has two

parts karikas and vrtti. According to some authorities, the karikas were written by Bharata and the vrtti by Mammata. Mammata wrote another book entitled the *Savdavyaparacarca*, on the derivation and function of words.

Mammata was supposed to be the maternal uncle of Harsha-Verdhana, King of Kanauj. Mamalladevi was the mother of Harsha. Thus Harsha often visited Kashmir for contact with Sanskrit scholars of Srinagar.

Somadeva, was another contemporary of king Anantdev and king Kalasa. He was the author of the *Kathasaritsagara*. He composed this for the amusement of Suryamati, the mother of king Kalash and grandmother of Harsadev. It was written sometime between A.D. 1063 and 1089. The main theme of this work seems to be adventures of Naravahanadatta, son of Udayana and his final attainment of Madanamanjarika as his wife and the land of Vidyadharas as his kingdom. He has composed a number of tales, legends and witty stories. He got inspiration from Gunadhya's *Brhatkatha* written in Paisaci dialect.

Another poet of eminence was Abinanda. He lived in first half of 10th century A.D. He composed *Kadambari—Katha Sara* a meterical summary of Bana's famous prose romance. His father's name was Jayanta Bhatt. Abhinanda traces his ancestry from Sakti who belongs to Gauda country and later on settled in Kashmir. But it is believed that Jayant was a contemporary of Shanker-Varman (A.D. 883-902), it can be inferred that Abhinanda lived in the first part of the 10th century. He was held in high esteem by the later Kashmirian writers.

From the accounts of Kalhana we come to know that King Kalash had a number of temples destroyed and des-respected images of Gods and Goddesses because of Islamic influence that had long since penetrated in the valley.

Utkarsa had now become ruler of Kashmir and had continued the policy of his father and kept him (Harsha) imprisoned and refused to grant him permission to retire abroad. He ruled only for few days. Vijamal the younger brother of Harsa was appointed Prime Minister. Vijamal and other ministers like Jayaraja requested the king to release Harsa but the king paid no heed. Vijamal collected huge



army and also with help of Damaras a fierce battle was fought in the fields of present Tashwan, Srinagar wherein Utkarsa was defeated. The object of the rebels was to release Harshdev from his confinement. Availing himself of the confusion, Harsha managed to come out from prison—after bribing guards by his adroit diplomacy. He was set free and got the compromise with Vijay Malla. He availed himself of confusion in the palace and seized the throne which he could claim by right. Utkarsa whose reign lasted only for twenty-two days was made captive in the palace and in his disgrace committed suicide. He had reached the age of twenty-four.

### HARSH DEV

(1089—1101 A.D.)

He was a prince with accomplished qualities. In the words of Kalhana, the king was the crest-jewel of the learned, adorned men of learning with jewels and bestowed upon them the privileges of litters, horses, parasols, etc. Besides scholars and artists Brahmans became the recipients of Harsha's bounties. They were given skins of black antelopes, cows, calves and other presents. Even he did not forget beggars. By addressing their prayers to him, they became able to support others. He was well versed in many languages. A good poet in all tongues and as a "depository of all learnings" he became famous in all other countries. He composed many poems and songs which were even sung and heard even in the time Kalhana was alive. Kalhana says he was a striking personality and beautiful youth, courageous and fond of display. He depicts him as cruel but at the same time kind hearted, liberal, greedy, violent and cunning and wanting of thought. His rule began well and distributed salaries to persons who were fit and had good qualities. He granted allowances which his father had already granted and was meagre. It is said that he took his meals on every second day. He wore ear-rings and flashed like the reflected image of the sun and his head-dress was decorated with diadem, his bushy beard was hanging down low, his shoulders were broad, his arms were great and his body was dark reddish diadem. He had a wide chest with a narrow waist. He had a deep voice

with thunder. Even a brave man would lose his presence of mind. At the palace gate he had hung up great bells so that he could be informed of the petitioner who had come with a desire of making the representation. He was fond of pomp and show and introduced more elaborate fashions in dress and ornaments—perhaps an indication of Western—muslim influence, making his courtiers imitate his own taste for extravagance in personal attire. Nobody was seen without brilliant dress without gold ornaments. He received riches from various countries at the palace gate. In the king's palace councillors, chamberlains and other attendants moved about in golden chains and bracelets which became common that whenever the king went out in the company of his ministers, each minister was in turn everywhere mistaken by the spectators for the king. Kalhana writes : "Set off with golden leaf of Ketaka the bun coiffure was decked with long flower garlands : the tremendous blossoms of the tilaka embraced the lovely forehead patch; the line of collyrium joined the corners of the eyes to the ear; bows of string woven with gold were tied at the end of the tresses which were worn in plaits; the long tail-end of the lower garments kissed the surface of the floor; the brassiers which traced the curves of the breasts concealed the upper half of the arms; when they wore men's dresses they bore the charm of the god of love in disguise!" This indicates that during his reign Collyrium eye-salve (anjana) usually made of black-powdered antimony was very popular and besides enhancing the beauty of eyes, it was supposed to prevent ophthalmia. Vermilion, rubbed saffron and sandal wood were used in adorning the forehead to beautify the face. Kashmiri goldsmiths must have attained a high standard in the art of new fashions in different ornaments. Poorer women could ill afford gold and gems and loaded themselves with jewellery of silver, brass and other baser metals. All classes adorned their hair, ears and neck with fragrant and beautiful flowers which is in abundance here. From the sculpture available in Srinagar museum it is quite evident that among the ornaments, great place of honour was given to *deji-hor* an egg-shaped, solid but intricately engraved two piece set hanging from both ears with the support of a strong thread *ata-hor* which was tied to the head gear with a pin and was designed

in a beautiful manner. With the passage of time this ornaments obtained religious sancity and was considered an important symbol of married life without which our women would feel miserable to move out of her house. It is said that Kashmiri Muslim women were in the habit of putting on this ornament but they have now discarded (dejihor); other ornaments are the same in both the communities.

He adopted a wise policy in retaining many of the ministers, officials and servants of his father's time, and by his kind disposition, won their devotion.

Harsha adopted the Karnataka coin types and the gold coins of the king with the elephant type amply corroborate the poet's statement. His patronage of arts and letters had brought Harsa in touch with the people of Karnataka. This association also influenced the court atmosphere, with result that people started coming to his assembly hall with waving palm-leaves in their hands, sandal marks on their foreheads, and attractive long daggers on their person. But on the other hand Kalhana's statement that in his time "the use of gold and silver money was plentiful in the land, but that of copper money rare" is however, contradicted by the abundance of his copper coins.

Successful in his home administration, Harsa tried to assert his authority in some of the adjoining mountain territories. Sangramapala of Rajapur, (Rajauri) at this time for reasons not known to the chronicler had turned hostile to Kashmir. Harsa despatched his faithful officer Kandarpa as the head of a garrison to fight with Samgrama. In the battle which ensued, Kandarpa defeated the lord of Rajapur (Rajauri) and forced him to pay tribute. He placed Kandarpa incharge of the gate (Dranga) of Lohara. Madana, was appointed by him Chief of the army staff. Some of the rebels who had been imprisoned during his father's time had been restored to their own posts. Sunna, the son of Vajra and grandson of Ksema was raised to the chief rank.

Shortly after conspirators began to hatch up plots to oust Harsa. General Vijayamalla, the brother of Harsa had raised a rebellion against him in the early part of his reign but receiving no support from the Kashmirian minister or soldiers, he had to flee to Darad country Gurais where he died in an



avalanche crash while sleeping in his tent. Another brother of the Kashmirian king, Jayaraja by name and a relative named Dhammata who were desirous of the throne started secret intrigues to kill Harsa. The plan was disclosed before it could be given final effect to and Harsa by an unique display of his diplomatic skill executed both the rebels. But the monarch did not rest there. He massacred a number of his near relatives apprehending similar treason on their part. Among these hapless victims was Domba the eldest son of Utkarsa.

Harsa had then a breath of peace but peace only outwardly and in the material sense, for there was a revolution now in his inner-self, and his mind was in a strange position. By this time, he had fallen in the company of "black hearted people" and under their influence a feeling of revenge started in his mind against his father. (Kalshdev). As already mentioned Kalshdev had shifted from his old capital located on the left bank of river Jhelum below Habba-Kadal to the new capital which he had commenced building in the village Jayavana (Modern Zevean), Harshdev raised it to the ground. He called his father by the name of Papasena i.e., one whose army was composed of sinners. He did not give any donations to the Mathas but at Zevean and Vijayesvara (Vijbror) he granted Pattas to the suffering and those who were hungry, sick helpless poor or otherwise. Canpaka, the illustrious father of our master historian Kalhan Pandit would spend seven days in a year at Nandisaksetra (temple in Vangath whose ruins we can still observe) and spent money on alms. His wife Vasantlekh had founded Mathas and Agraharas in the city and at the holy Tripuresvara near Shalimar Bagh. This all happened in his early life but as already stated, his mind had changed now and was perverted by the Ministers and advisers who surrounded him on all sides. He spent his fathers' accumulated wealth on extravagant expenditure and senseless indulgence in costly pleasures which involved him in great financial difficulties. His attention turned towards the endowment of temples. He therefore ordered as Kalhana says. "Let the villages, the gold and other property bestowed upon the temple of Shiva Kalasesvara be taken away, with the stones. I shall build a bridge over the Jhelum. He accidentally discovered the hoarded treasures at the temple of Bhima Shahi

(now Ziarat of Baba Bam Din at Bumzu) and it induced him to spoil other temples. At Loladhara temple (Lolab) he took away the statue of the diety and asked the Brahman Pujarito to free the God from captivity let therefore the treasures of the shrine be handed over to us. Then the greedy minded king plundered from all temples the wonderful treasures which the former rulers had bestowed there. In order to get hold of the statues of Gods too when treasures of the temples had been carried off, he appointed Udaryaraja to overthrow divine images. In order to defile the statues of Gods, he had excrements and urine povred over their faces whose nose, feet and hands had been cut. Divine images made of Gold, Silver and other materials rolled about even on the roads which were covered with night soil as if they were logs of wood crippled and the like, covered the images of Gods were now dragged along by ropes round the ankles with spitting instead of flowers. It is a sufficient proof that Islam had penetrated in the valley and king Harshdev was greatly influenced. There was says Kalhana, not one temple in a village, town or in the city which was not spoiled of its images by the Truska, King Harshdev. "Only two chief divine images were respected by him and he did not raise his hands against these, one is the illustrious temple of Rana Swamin (now grave yard of Haji Pir Mohmad Sahib at Saraf Kadal, Srinagar) and the other the famous temple of Martand for which the king had some reverence and respect, and the two colossal images of Buddha, one at Srinagar and the other at Parihasapur, for which special requests were made by some eminent persons who had never before received any favour from the King. Harshadev became Iconoclast because of the influence of Islam in the valley. Kanak uncle of Kalhane and Srawana Kusalasri had saved some temples which had been erected by King Lalitaditya. After this, Harshdev imposed new and oppressive taxes, Kalhana tells us that even the night-soil became the object of special taxation. Misery, discontent and chaos spread through out the whole Kingdom. Harshdev abandoned himself more and more to excesses and blunders. Extravagant acts show the ascendancy gained over by shameless parasites and furnished unmistakable proof of the kings insanity. The recollection of Harshdev's proceedings still lives in the Kash-

miri phrase, "Yikyaho, Harshdev hyu" why he is like Harshdev. It is these days applied to persons who commit foolish and extravagant acts.

There is one more folk phrase used these days, when a mistake is committed by a person, "Panun PanMeh Kar Harishdev Hyu" (Donot be like Harashdev). From this time onward, Harsh's career becomes a record of follies and misdeeds. Guided by evil counsellors he began to excel in all kinds of sins and crimes conceivable to man. He placed in his seraglio a large number of concubines ; scores of talented fair complexioned girls delighted the king with feasts of songs, music and dance. For days and weeks Harshadev forgot himself of the responsibilities of politics and government while he was absorbed in soirees and carousals. It was the over-indulgence and lose intimacy with girls that contributed to the downfall of the soft-hearted king. But he was not satisfied with that and committed various acts of incest with his near relatives.

But only greed is not sufficient to account for such revolutionary measures as the spoilation of temples and the dishonouring of gods and goddesses by a Hindu king in a Hindu State. As already stated Islam came to exercise its influence on the Kashmir court from about the middle of the eighth century. Kalhana tells us that king Vijraditya 737-44 A.D. "sold many men to the Mlecchas," (Muslims) and Samkravarman (Shankerverman) (883-902 A.D) "plundered straight away sixty-four temples. It was however in the time of Anantdev (1028-63 A.D.) that the Islamic influence became much more marked. He gave refuge to a number of Shahi princes who fled from the Punjab after its occupation by Mahmud of Ghazni. These princes gradually acquired great hold over the king and out of mischief otherwise, tried to introduce many Islamic beliefs and practices in Kashmir. Kalhana tells us that Anangapala, one of the Sahi princes and great favourite of Ananta" was ever planning the breaking up of the golden statues of gods. Nothing of this kind, however then took place but the king did contract extravagant habits from outsiders. He was again under the influence of the descendants of these Sahis that Kalshadev had confiscated the village grants of a number of temples and destroyed some sacred



images. Islam had brought about a change in the public opinion. Bilhana, the great scholar of this age testifies that Islamic influence was predominant in the neighbourhood of the Valley that is in Poonch District. Kalhana also tells us that Harshadev had definitely come under the influence of of Muslims. (Turushkas) but had not become a convert.

A fresh calamity befell the miserable people of Kashmir. An epidemic plague broke out in the country and day and night the sound of funeral music did not cease, accompanied by loud lamentations. While plague was raging and robbers and thieves were infesting the country, there occurred a disastrous flood in the year 1099-1100 A.D. due to incessant rains. The villages were flooded by an inundation and there arose an extreme scarcity of all wares. Many articles like salt and pepper disappeared from the market. Prices of necessities of life soared very high. Consequently the price of a Kharwar of Shali went up to five hundred Dinars and grape juice cost one Dinar, a Pala ( $1/20$  of seer). There was great loss of life on account of disease and hunger. (Kalhana tells us the water of the streams was covered with a dead, whose corpses were swollen from being soaked with water as if forest of cut trees had come down the mountains). At this time when the country was engulfed through ever widening events of devastation, the people expected that, the Government would come to their rescue. But instead of taking any measure of relief the king imposed fines of them on various pretexts which took away their breath just as if a burden were thrown on an old bullock which has become worn out by dragging the plough.

To divert the attention of discontented and rebellious people, Harsha now attended the annihilation of Damars. Although in the past they had often shown a refractory behaviour and justly deserved punishment, they seem to have done nothing to arouse the king's anger at this time, but he levied against them a vague charge of having become "over powerful", and "like another god of death", ordered his Governor Anand of the district of Madavarajya (Maraz) Anantnag Pargana to slay of the Damars. He also announced that whosoever brought the head of a Damara would be handsomely rewarded. He therefore attacked the nests of the Damars of Holda (Modern Tral) and brought their heads

like the birds in their nests and made the gate of the king's palace with a Damara skulls, which appeared like cups. He also butchered the Brahmans like Damaras. Some of the Damaras fled away and took refuge in the neighbouring lands of Muslim rulers. Those of them who escaped death or could not go out were reduced to such an abject condition that they were obliged to earn their living by working on water wheels, handed mills and the like. There was another tribe called Lavanyas (modern Lone), whom the king persecuted. They had come from the hills of Lolab and Handwara Tehshils. To crush them was the king's highest ambition. They had their own army. They still preserve the Kram Lun....The Lavanyas mentioned here play a great part in the internal troubles. They must have formed at that time an unimportant tribal section of the rural population of Kashmir and their name like that of the Tantrins survives in a modern Kram name of very frequent occurrence viz. Lun (Lone). They begin to play a dominant role in the politics of Kashmir in the 11th century and onwards. The numerous passages in which they Lavanayas as a body or individuals are referred to, tell us nothing about their origin but show that many of them must have held a position of influence as land owners or tribal headmen. The designation of Lun or other Krams in Kashmir is nowadays a mere name, there being nothing to distinguish those who bear it. They are now muslims in their faith. They are now agriculturists. Luns are found throughout the valley and upto Jonaraja's time the Lavanyas seem to have retained a certain importance, as their name is of frequent occurrence in his chronicle.

The unprovoked slaughter of Damaras and the Lavanyas in Madavarajya (modern Maraz) roused their brethren in Kramrajya (Kamraz), who had united and were offering effective resistance to their persecutors when the king's suspicion was aroused against Uccala and Sussala, possible claimants to the throne. They mustered in force in the Laulaha area (modern Lalab Pargana) attacked the royal garrison stationed there and took a heavy toll of it. Both of them Sussala and Uccala fled at night from Srinagar in autumn of 1100 A.D. with a help of Damaras. They reached at the headquarters of Damaras at Vutrers village (Kothar Pargana),

wherefrom they also escaped to Rajauri and Kalinjara. The rebellious Damaras opened negotiations with Uccala, the elder brother and induced him to the throne. When the two had left the country Harshdev offered money to the ruler of Rajauri to kill Uccala through Lakshman Dhar. The ruler of Rajauri did not pay any heed to it. Uccala's claims were based on geneological facts. He was through Jassaraj, Gunga and Malla, the fourth direct descendent from Kantiraja, the brother of Didda Rani and uncle of king Sangram Raja of Kashmir. Sangram Raja was the father of Anantdev. From Anantdev was born king Kalashdev. From Kalashdev were born Harshdev and the rest.

## CIVIL WAR

When the two had left for Rajauri, King Harshdev had become frightened on account of intending invasion of two brothers. Meanwhile Uccala entered into treaty with Damaras, whom the ruler of Rajauri feared. Soon after Uccala left for kashmir through Tosa Miadan route in 1101 A.D. in the early months of spring. Uccala was joined by a small force of Damaras. The whole route was covered by snow. His forces attacked Harshdev's Governor Anand who was posted in Kramarajiya (modern Kamraz). He first reached Varamullah (modern Baramulla) and the Damaras of that area met him for help. After proceeding further from Hushkapur (modern Ushkur), Uccala occupied Taramaltaka in Kamraz district. The place is not indentified as yet. Then he captured the governor of Harshdev, who urged him to proceed to Srinagar. In the way he plundered villages and towns till he reached the capital of Lallitaditya that is Parihaspur (the capital city) from which it was difficult to get out on account of steep slopes and the water round it (now known as Panzur and Hara Trath). A word was sent to King Harshadev secretly that "I have dragged him along and thrown him before you like a jackal .....come quickly and capture him." King's army reached on the spot and Uccala's forces were routed and most of the Damaras who were employed as mercanaries by Uccala were killed and most of them threw themselves in Rajvihara at Parihaspur were they where subsequently burnt. Uccala fled



away and crossed Jhelum, near Gauri Kabala (modern Gauripora). Meanwhile Uccala did not sit idle and collected a large force to capture the throne. At this time a severe famine broke out which Uccala faced bravely. Meanwhile Harshdev removed the glorious image of Vishnu-Pari Hasakeshva. It was a story among the people that before the erection of that image of Pari Hasakeshva, that it will have its end at the hands of a tyrant. Avoiding the open plain, where the king's mounted troops could effectively defeat Uccala, he along with the rebel Damara forces marched across the hills into the Sind valley where they won a complete victory over Harshdev forces; thus leaving the road open to the Srinagar city for Uccala. At this time Sussala also attacked Kashmir from the south. He appeared from the direction of Surapura (Modern Hurapur). Sussala seems to have secured for his use the revenue of the custom Chowki at Surapura. Sussala's movements were quick. King Harshdev's forces were routed at Surapura. Many were drowned in the waters of Vaitarani stream (modern Vishov Stream) Tehsil Kulgam. Sussala's troops were stopped at Lokapunya (modern Lokabawan on Anantnag-Vernag road mile 9). He again defeated the King's forces and threw himself upon Vijayeswara (modern Bijbehara) and here King's troops were defeated again under Chander Raja who was forced to surrender. Sussala marched eagerly and knocked at the doors of Srinagar. Harsha was surrounded by incapable and inefficient advisers; he was vacillating in his plan of action. In the meanwhile Sussala occupied various places, and appeared before the palace itself. His attack was directed against the city from the south and on the left bank of the river Jhelum, Bhoja, Harshdev's brave heir apparent managed to beat off Sussala's attack. But while he was resting from the combat by his father's side, news came that Uccala had also penetrated into the city from the North. The treachery of the city prefect Naga, who commanded there had opened to the pretender the narrow passage which was left in the natural defences of the city, on that side and soon the Damaras led the attack by the brave Janakchander of Lahara, set foot on the bridge leading over the river in front of the palace. The palace is identified to have existed in the modern Tanki Pur, Zaindar Mohalla and including present mohallas of Karfali

Mohlla and Dalhassanyar. The king vainly attempted to stem the onslaught at the bridge head. His fighting elephant was wounded and turning back upon his own force caused panic. Harshdev managed to retire across the bridge but the palace had been set to fire and forced him to leave it with the mounted troops remaining around him. Seventeen ladies of the royal household, among them the Chief Queen Vasantlekha who was princess of the Sahi dynasty burnt themselves on a pavilion of the palace from which they had watched the approaching enemy. The palace was sacked and set on fire by plundering Damaras who were joined by the city mob. The king was anxious to die fighting but paralysed by his misfortune. His son Bhoja had taken refuge in Hatikarna village (modern Vogahom village, near Bijtehara) with a small number of servants. Uccala retired to the right bank of the river and had given him a chance to escape. Harasha was deserted on all sides and left the palace in pouring rain. Kalhana gives a pathetic description of the unfortunate King's flight. He was compelled to seek shelter in a beggars hut in some locality near the right bank of the river below Srinagar. His grief was increased when he heard that his son Bhoja had been killed treacherously. In anguish and exhausted by hunger he then passed several nights in this way. Finally his hideout was known to the soldiers who surrounded the hut and after parrying the King's weapon they struck him repeatedly twice with a dagger in the breast. After uttering twice the word "O Mahesvara", he felt dead to the ground and died at the age of 42 and eight Months. He was (remated while his body was naked like a pauper by a compassionate wood cutter.

Summing up the king's oppression and cruelties, Kalhana says". In the form of Harsa some Demon had descended to the earth to destroy this land hallowed by gods. Tirthas and Risis". Ever since their return from the Dugdhaagatta fort. the popularity of Uccala and Sussala had been on the ascent, from that time onwards says Kalhana, that these two proud princes deserved the crown of Kashmir but not the cowardly king.

The history of Kashmir after the death of Harshdev is a record of short reigns, murders, suicides, plots, conspiracies, rebellions, oppressions and heavy taxation. In the words of

Francis Young Husband it was a state of perpetual intrigue and assassination of struggle with brothers, cousins, uncles—of fights for power with Ministers, with the military, with the nobles when he was on it, of constant fear of poisoning and assassination, of wearying, petty internecine wars of general discomfort uncertainty and unrest.

## UCCALA

(1101 to 1111 A.D. the Second Lohara Dynasty)

Harsha was succeeded by the eldest of the rebel brothers, Uccala. The first task before Uccala was to disarm his troublesome allies, the Damaras. His position was embarrassing at this time. Damar had helped him to kill Harshdev and had become too powerful in the land. He therefore started to adopt Machiavellian tactics. "Destroy those Damaras by fire when they are collected." They appeared to be constant source of trouble to the throne. He succeeded for the time being, to curb the power of the wild barons (Damaras). Janakachandra a powerful Damara Chief was killed. Kaliya and other Damaras of Madovarajya (Maraz) who were now inclined of playing against the king were totally annihilated. Even his younger ambitious brother who looked upon the power of the king with envy was also removed, and crowned as a sovereign of the territory of Lohara (now Poonch and Rajauri) districts. Uccala was a dynamic and a capable ruler and fairly energetic. In order to gain the popularity and fame he punished corrupt Kayasthas or petty officials. In accordance with the ancient tradition Jayamati was crowned as his queen and as an inalienable part of the coronation ceremony the sacred water of abhisheka was sprinkled on her body. His queen was of humble origin.

Her parentage is unknown, but she was a dancer and a singer. She was picked up from a street and adopted as a daughter by one dancing girl belonging to the family of danseuse Kanashravati. Because of physical form, Jayamati was initiated in the art of dancing by her adopted mother and in course of time she achieved mastery over it. She also learnt music and dancing. Her apartments were crowded with young and wealthy men. Seeking pleasure in festivities of dance and



music. It was at one of such gatherings that Jayamati met Uccala and married him. King Uccala was a good-intentioned ruler whose one great desire in life was to reform the administration and weed out corruption in officialdom. Jayamati proved of great assistance to him in this stupendous task.

One of the notable blessings which Uccala conferred upon his subjects was the opening of hospitals in different parts where medicine was distributed free to the sick. He abolished unjust imposts but levied sufficient taxes on the rich and well-to-do. With the finances thus raised he executed his well thought-out schemes for the advancement of the poverty-stricken and exploited classes. Uccala's outstanding achievement in eradicating corruption has been acknowledged in glowing terms by historians. He put his finger at the sore point and accurately ascertained why and where the body ached. Completing his investigations, he dismissed every official found resorting to the evil practice of speculation in any form. Some of them whose guilt was serious he imprisoned and if he thought even this would not meet with the ends of justice, he ordered more dire punishments. A high functionary who had through trickery secured the title of Mahatma but was found to be mean and unfair in his dealings, was compelled by the king to wear hempen clothing in prison. Another senior officer, Bhut Bhischa, was made to dress like a strolling minstrel and to run like a Domba soldier on the high street. Says Kalhana : "The tall man with his beard tied up, an extravagant turban, the impaling stake in his hand and his knees and thighs tied together who could help laughing at him".

Uccala discouraged flattery. He forbade flunkeys, backbiters and tale-bearers to approach him. "By torturing in a painful manner persons of whom Loshtadhara and others were the ring-leaders, who whispered evil in his ears, he made slander fallow". Only men with independent views who would not hesitate to tell the truth at the king's face adorned his court and dominated his counsels.

It was a peculiar merit of Uccala rarely possessed by autocrats that in punishing the culprits he was careful to see that their dependents were not harassed or touched. On no

occasion did his officials persecute wives, sons, relatives or friends of those numerous offenders whose punishment he commanded because they were proved guilty. Such levity and consideration had been unknown for centuries before Uccala came to power. But it was in consonance with many other beneficial and sensible reforms which he had introduced. "Under the new king every thing in the kingdom became new such as the etiquettes of the court debates, administration and the rest".

In first evolving the ideas of an enlightened administration and a sober society and then putting them into effect, Jayamati's share was by no means insignificant or unimportant. Like Fredrick the great of Russia. Uccala considered himself as the first servant of the State and devoted his entire energy to the service of his subjects. In times of famine, he sold grains to his people at cheap prices from the royal granary and thus saved them from utter ruin. He administered justice in an even-handed manner and like Cyrus of Iran moved among his subjects incognito, hearing their grievances, and redressing them as far as practicable.

But he had drawbacks in his character. Kalhana related that the monarch was jealous of noble bearing, courage, intelligence, power of endurance and youth in other persons. He was also haughty by nature and was in the habit of publicly discussing the shortcomings of the lineage, daily life, and personal appearance etc., of his followers. The inevitable result of all these acts was the alienation of his dependants and in time of crisis the king was deprived of their natural fidelity and affection.

Full of mercy Uccala freed even robbers from the living of plunder and made them lead a blameless life by giving themselves as guardians of treasuries. This liberal king was heard saying, "Give, give to him". He flooded his people with presents. Not even king Harashdev showed such extravagance in offering betel (pan) at assemblies etc. He employed himself in every direction and throwing his soul into everything. He acquired a full knowledge of affairs and became as it were "the soul of people" on the occasion of Sharad ceremonies especially on eclipses, comets, he bestowed upon Brahmans thousands of cows, horses, gold and other gifts. The town of

Nandi Kehstar (Naranag, Sind valley) which had been burnt during his reign by a sudden conflagration was rebuilt more beautiful than it was before. The silver image of Vishnu Perihaskeshava which king Harashdev had carried off was put up afresh by the king at Parihaspur. He adorned the shrine of Vishnu at Tribuvana Swanimim (now graveyard of Thag Baba Shahib Watal Kadal, Srinagar.) and which was damaged by Harshdev. He also renovated the throne, the emblem of royal power which king Jayaped had acquired and had been injured by fire at Harshdev's overthrow on the bank of Tsunt Kuhl (ancient Mahasarit).

Jayamati's kind-heartedness once brought her into trouble with her husband. King Harsha's son Bhoja had been treacherously assassinated by an armed messenger even before that king was himself murdered by the insurgents. But Bhoja's infant son, Bhikshachara, was living and with the intention of wiping out the dynasty of his foe, Uccala passed orders that the tiny prince should be drowned in the Jhelum. The infant was in charge of Jayamati when the executioners arrived and demanded that the doomed fellow be handed over to them under royal command. The innocent looks of the prince no less than his "prattling sounds" moved the queen to her depths and with great tactfulness she saved the life of Bhikshachara. But the secrecy was disclosed and Uccala grew indifferent and cold towards the queen. Bhiksacara as already mentioned was condemned to die and was taken at night by the executioners from Jayamati's room to the place of execution and was bound to a stone and thrown in to the Jhelum. The winds drove him to the bank where a sympathetic Brahman found him with his breast still palpitating. After some time he recovered consciousness and was given by that Brahman to Asamati. The woman took the boy secretly to the south where he grew up. The ruler of Malwa kept this boy like his own son and trained him in the art of warfare and sciences. Here Uccala had formed the alliance with his brother Sussal, the ruler of Lohara to whom a son was born in the year 1105-6 A.D. Before this alliance Sussal had made an attack on Uccala to deprive him of the kingdom. The attack was repulsed with the help of the Damara chief Gargachandra and Sussal was forced to take his refuge in Dardistan (Gurais &



Telal), from where, after many ups and downs he regained his own territory, the Kingdom of Lohara. The son born to Sussal was named Jayasima when "Bhiksacara escaped to Malwa. Jayasimha, as Kalhana has put it was capable of upholding the world which was sinking in misfortune". Jayasimha means "lion of victory". Uccal was not to live long. Conspiracy was hatched under the leadership of Chudda, the city perfect and his brother Radda who claimed descent from Yasaskar, and they were joined by the disgruntled officials who attacked the King at night and he ran for safety from room to room and tried to scale the railing of the palace. But they cut his legs and throat by one Sadda who after the crime cried, "it was I who was turned out of office by him." This was the year December 1111 A.D. He was taken to the cremation ground naked and cremated in the Island of Maisma then, now Kawij Bagh, Amira Kadal Srinagar. The queen Jayamati committed Sati by entering the flames with the dead body of her beloved husband. "Then as she was in the act of ascending the funeral pyre, the relic-seekers begging for ornaments looted her and caused hurt to her limbs".

Utter confusion prevailed in the palace following this ghastly murder. Radda placed himself on the throne assumed the title of Shankhraj and took the royal sceptre in his blood-stained hands. But he could keep the throne only for a night and was removed from his position by a powerful Damara chief, Gargachandra, the leading Damara of Lar district and a trusted supporter of Uchchla attacked the traitors and overpowering them with his force and avenged his masters death in the blood of Radda and his associates. Finding no candidates suitable for the throne Gargachandra installed Salhana by name a step brother of Uccala. This was the year A.D. 1112. But the new King proved a worthless Prince; he was made merely a puppet in the hands of Gargachandra, the Damara chief. At this time news of Uccala's death reached Lohara. Sussla marched to Kashmir without even collecting an army. He entered Jhelum valley road via Haji Pir Pass and took up position at Hush Kapur (Ushkar) near Baramulla and was easily defeated by Garga. Sussal was forced to run away to his own kingdom Lohara, over snow covered passes. Though he was defeated he again planned for the conquest of

Kashmir. Garga was not satisfied with the King's (Salhana) conduct. He invited Sussal to take over the Kingdom of Kashmir. Sussal marched on to Srinagar Via Baramullah and captured the palace and in the courtyard was heard "Victorious is King Sussal". Salhana whose reign had not lasted for more than four months was made prisnor and *Sussala ascended the throne in A.D. 1112.*

## KING SUSSAL

(1112-1120 A.D.)

After his accession to the throne, Sussal had many difficulties, he had to suppress the agitations of dissidents. He was firm in his policy and exterminated the families of those who had betrayed his brother by searching them out and he did not even leave their children. He displayed outward moderation when his objects demanded it. He was gentle but appeared cruel just "as if he has been a snake". He was liberal on the right occasion, "iresolute, brilliant in his conceptions, and a judge of signs and far sighted." His character was like that of Uccal. He removed his whole treasure from Srinagar to Lohara. This made him unpopular throughout and people started agitations and protests on a big scale so much so that Garga's brother-in-law a native of Devasarasa (Devsar Kulgam Tehsil) rebelled and slaughtered the king's troops. Susals maternal uncle Anand who was commander in Chief was defeated at Vijayeswara (Bijbehara). Garga returned in the hill forts at Phalna in the Kishen Ganga valley in a fort called Ratna Varsa and was deprived of his horses and was deserted by followers. So the enemy's army was completely routed and accepted the submission of Garga. After a little pause in the valley from the troubles and upheavels, Sussal went to Lohara in order to renew friendship of the neighbouring hill chiefs. He started an expedition against Somapala, chief of Rajapuri (Rajauri) who had invited Bhissacara at his court. The king of Kashmir kept Rajauri under occupation for seven months but failed to place there Sompala's rival and brother Nagapala whose cause he had taken up. The military expedition into Rajauri incurred a huge expenditure which resulted in imposition of high taxes on the subjects by king Sussal. The new taxation

alienated his subjects while his policy of sending into the castle of Lohara masses of gold in the form of gold ingots irritated the nobility as already mentioned above. Within a short time there was rising in other parts of the valley. Sussala failed to check his opponents and when they threatened the capital Srinagar, he retaliated by killing the Damaras who were held as hostages. Bhiksacara a claimant to the throne of Kashmir had collected his supporters in the Chenab Valley. (His early career has been mentioned somewhere else) escaped from the ruler of Malva. King Naravarmanand reached in Vallapur which is present Bilaver Jammu. He had met a number of hill chiefs at the pilgrimage of Kuruksetra (Thaneswar). The chief of Champa (Chamba) Vallapura (Billawar) and other hill states in the south of Kashmir espoused his cause. He planned to invade Kashmir but due to disunity among these chiefs the invasions of Kashmir did not materialise and he had to abandon it.

For a few years which were utilised by Sussal in the reorganisation of his cabinet and administration, he removed Mahalama Sahela and appointed Kayastha Gauraka to the position of Sarvadhikara (Prime Minister) who with the help of other Kayastha officials soon filled the royal treasury. He deprived royal servants of living they had found in every office and he kept the treasury always full. Sussal went on appointing various ministers. He built three grand temples on the banks of Jhelum in the name of his mother in law and wife. He renovated the vihar at Diddamar (Nawakadal) which had been burnt by a sudden conflagration.

There was again a rising of prominent Damara Prathvihara a villan Damara formed a league of territorial lords in the eastern parts of the valley and by the Spring of 1120 A.D. Prathvihara was defeated and he managed with difficulty to escape into Maraz (Madavarajya) and was once seen rowing in the midst of Avantipur, collected a huge number of Damaras in Samangasa (modern Shaugas in Kuthar Pargana, District Anantnag Islamabad). This alarmed the king who proceeded to Vijayeshwara (Bijbehara) and ordered his commander Tilaka to subdue these Damaras who had united to defeat the king. Damaras damaged everywhere the kings stores. Brahmans in every town held solemn fasts (Prayer) and even immolating themselves in fires. The destructions of



horses and camels by a plague indicated that a great calamity was hanging over the country. Sussal's troops suffered repeated defeats at the hands of the rebels. When their attacks threatened the capital, the enraged Sussal had the Damaras whom he held as hostages executed with "provoking cruelty." Mallakostha then brought Bhiksacara who had approached from the Chinab valley in to Kashmir and thus "gave the revolt unity a well defined object." Sussal's conduct was not proper, and had dissatisfied his officers and troops while the population of Srinagar was eager to have the pretender in their midst. Prithvihara induced Sussal to send his family away to the safe retreat of the Lohara Castle. Bhiksara joined Malakostha in the Sind Valley and soon after the ring of the rebel forces closed around Srinagar. Bhikasara had swooped on in the Valley through Banihal and Divsar. Sussal had accompanied his family members upto Hushkpur (Ushkur) and had returned to the city. Sussal defended the city with valour. The Damaras of Madavaraja had occupied the left bank of Tsunth Kul (Chinar Bagh) and were about to attack the king's palace located near Habba Kadal on the western bank on the kshiptika (Katakuh). His informants further told the king that the city was in commotion and the people were wavering in their loyalty.

It was a critical moment demanding firm action but Sussal was indecisive not knowing whether he should first vanquish the enemy at Vijayeshwara or return hastily to defend the city. Soon he heard of the defeat of his commander-in-Chief Sujji on the outskirts of Srinagar and of the plunder of royal gardens and godowns from which fuel for camp fires and hay for horses had been looted by the soldiers of the enemy. The last courier brought the alarming message that Bhikshakchara was about to enter the city and capture it; absence of the bridge over the Jhelum which had been burnt down by the royal guards alone prevented the enemy from doing so. Many women and children were recklessly killed by arrow shots, while the terrible slaughter of people increased, the king lost his energy and was incapable of going outside of his residence.

At this critical moment Yasoraja, a valiant fighter who had gone abroad several years before, astonishingly appeared from nowhere leading a big platoon of well-disciplined and

adequatetly equipped soldiers to assist the King Sussala. His sudden appearance on the scene of the battle on the side of the royal armies dismayed the rebels and tipped the scales in favour of the King.

While Susslla was fighting with his back to the wall and defending the city (Srinagar) with every ounce of his energy he commanded one Chudda, a lady commander who had sprung from a statesmen-soldiers and her son Panch Chandra to proceed to, Madhavraja (Manaz) and stop Mallakoshta from advancing further. Sussal was aware of the fact that Chudda was not only brave and adept in the art of war but also lady of honour, handsome well-built, intelligent and reliable. She was married to Garga Chandra a courtier wielding immense influence and when Sussal, ascended the throne in 1112 A.D. Garga Chandra became his Sarvadhikar (Prime Minister) and gave his two daughters Rajlaxmi and Gunalekha, in marraige respectively to the King and his sou Jayasimha; therefore Garga Chandra and his family were passionately devoted to Sussal. That knowledge made the King Sussal to select her in preference to others as commander of the forces which were despatched to thrust back advancing Mallakoshta and his troops.

The brahmins were greatly alarmed aud urged the King to send the hostages to Lohara because they had shown indifference in the fighting, The-country felt compelete confusion and plundering became excessive. In one engagement the rebels consisted of two hundred and fifty men. On the 6th Vadi Sussala marched out of Srinagar, followed by some faithful troops and after bribing dangerous opponents on the road to gain exit. Trade had come to a standstill and money became scarce. There was no stable economy. In the meanwhile Sussala's army defected and joined Bhiksacar, who now entered triumphant into Srinagar. On behalf of Bhiksacara Janaka Simha established an understanding with the Cavaliers, Chiefs, Tantrins, citizens and others. They made common cause with the Damaras and Bhikhasacara was installed as king of Kashmir, in 1120 A.D.

**KING BHIKSACARA**

(1120 to 1121 A.D)

The restoration of Harshas lineage was destined to be of short duration. He was inexperienced and sensual by nature and was too engaged in tasting the pleasures of his newly gained throne to concern himself with its safety. He was of licentious nature. He gave himself up to the pleasures of life and neglected the affairs of the state. He developed the "taste for girls and rich dishes". The people of the land were at the mercy of the Damaras. They had acquired supreme control of the Valley. They oppressed the people. The royal stores for the horses, army and swords were plentiful and captured by the Damaras. King's court was surrounded by ruffians and rustics who wore woolen blankets (Kambal). Since he (The King) had given full authority to the Damaras they considered him as their "Avtar". The real power in his time was in the hands of Bimba while Bhiksacara enjoyed the mere title of the King. Bimba was his Prime Minister (Sarvadhikara). There was no money in the land and the economy was shattered and rules of business broke down. At this time Bhiksacara sent his Sarvadhikar at the head of an army to conquer Lohara. In this venture he received the assistance of the chief of Rajapuri, Somapala and was also joined by a Muslim force under Sallara Vismaya who as some scholar maintain was probably a Muslim chief from the lower Punjab hills. But the combined force which met Sussala on the banks of the Vitola, near parnotsa (Poonch), was totally routed. Soldiers in Kashmir were dissatisfied with the rule of Bhiksacara and they instantly defected and joined Sussala's army. Bimba had nothing to do but to retreat and Sussala marched to recapture Kingdom of Kashmir, halting at Hushkapur (Ushqur). people had longed Sussala's return. The Damara leaders Mallakostha and Janakacandra now joined him. Some of the Agrahara's\* were plundered and the Brahmans held fast for removing Bhiksacara. The fast was held at a temple in Vijayesyara (modern Bijbehara), the same fast was held by Brahmans in the city to oust the prince. He

\* Agrahara designates a 'Jagir', village or piece of land, the revenue of which is assigned to an individual, corporations or religious institutions.



could not appease them. King's messengers tried to pacify these Brahmans but they replied with arrogant words "without the long beard we cannot get on". The whole city was ready for the restoration of King Sussala. The Brahman corporation expressed their faith in Sussala. Marching from Barmulla where he had stayed for some time Sussala appeared before the gates of Srinagar. He marched round the north shores of the Vular lake, through Khuyhama to Lohara (Lar). He appeared unexpected and unopposed in the north of the city on Jyaistha 1121 A.D. His opponents were waiting in the south of city. This march from Baramulla to Srinagar was carried on without any bloodshed. Bhiksacara left Kashmir together with Prithvihar and the rest through Hurapur village (old Mughal route) Shopian tehsil. Bhiksacara the king and Prithvihara left the capital and took refuge with Sompala, the chief of Rajauri.

### SUSSALA RESTORED

(1121-1128 A.D.)

On his restoration to the throne, he appointed a new chief of the army staff who was uptill now in charge of Kheri (Kur Narvav is in Kulgam Tehsil and is now known as Nurabad) or Narvav. He brought to his own side all Damara Chiefs. In the meanwhile Bhiksacara had settled in the village Pusyan anadā (modern Pusiana), at the southern foot of the Pir Panchal. He had collected a large army and began his invasion of the valley. Sussala's next commander Harshmitra could not resist and retreated from Vijayeshvar (modern Bijbehara) and fled in fear and panic from Vijayeshvar (Bijbehara) to the shrine of Vishnu in Ckradhar situated on a Kareva below Bijbehara on the left bank of Jhelum now called by locals Semthan udar. The victorious Damaras burnt the temple of Ckradhar mercilessly. The courtyard of the temple was protected by a massive wooden rampart and gate. A certain wicked Damara chief Janakraj butchered the people inside the temple that Kalhana had admitted that the place became suddenly silent, The temple and its inhabitants who had taken refuge in it were burnt and the dwellings were raised to the ground. After Bhiksacara had committed such a ghastly crime that the

whole town of modern Bijbehara and surrounding areas seemed deserted. It was a turning point in his career and fortune. He was ridiculed person among the people of the valley. King Sussala blamed himself for the slaughter. Sussala punished the Damara Lord Janakraj and put him to death at Avantipur.

Thence after Bhisksacara fled back to Pusiana (Southern Pirpanchal) and next year he invaded the valley with a large army with loyal commanders under the leadership of Prithvi Hara. His army was composed mostly of Damaras. In the meantime Sussala's beloved wife Meghamanjari died due to shock. He was dejected. Bhisksacara carried a fire and sword throughout his march and the Damaras set fire to the various temples in the way. This sacrilege became an object of ridicule among the masses. They developed deep hatred for him. Bhisksacara started a type of guerilla warfare. This was not liked by the Damara Chiefs who formed a clique against him and finally he had to yield before Damaras. Sussal had led an army of warriors to challenge the Damaras whom he met at Kulyanpur now (Kalampur), shopian Tehsil, and completely defeated them. Sussal had now abdicated the throne in favour of his son Jayasimha in 1123 A.D.

But after some time Sussal changed his mind. He kept the reins of the Government in his own hands, but distrusted his son whom he placed under "surveillance"; this helped him to pacify his subjects.

But next year Bhisksacara returned again with a fresh recruited soldiers of the lower hills of the Punjab and marched hurriedly and laid siege to Srinagar. This was the year 1123 A. D. and was the darkest year in the annals of Kashmir. Greedy Damaras collected round Srinagar and laid a prolonged siege. City people had to suffer a great deal and the communication with the countryside became impossible and also difficult for the city people to feed themselves and their children. Wicked Damaras turned half of the city into ashes. Stores of food were exhausted due the fire. Famine started; people died in thousands and the new crops were not allowed to be harvested by the Damaras who laid waste the country side. Bhiskascara was a tool in the hands of Damaras. He had no say in the affairs. Dissension prevailed among the

leading Damaras which helped Sussal to effect his subjugation. Bhiksacara's faithful Damara commanders were forced to run away from Srinagar and they took refuge in Samala (Hamal, modern Rafiabab Tehsil Handawara). Then he fled to Lohara. Sussal came out from his hideout Navamatha which is identified at present locality of Shivpour south of Srinagar, where the Jhelum river formed a round with a moat and was not accessible to the enemy. In order to get rid of Bhiksacara, Sussala now made a plan to kill him secretly. A plot was hatched with Utpala, an agent of Damara Tikka and it was decided that Utpala, would kill Bhiksacara at Tikka's seat. But Utpala, who was Tikka's man, disclosed the matter to his master and formed conspiracy to kill the king in turn. Sussala used to hold secret conferences with Utpala. On one occasion, Utpala and his associates found the king unguarded and killed him brutally. (1128 A.D.)

In the field of literature and art of learning there flourished great eminent poets like Bilhana whose account has already been given. Shambu lived in the court of King Harsa. His Rajendra Karnapura is a high flown panegyric eulogising his patron and his Anyokto-muktalata is a collection of verses on various topics indicating indirect meaning.

The first Lohara dynasty came to an end with the death of Harshdev and the second year of the 12th century brought the accession of the second Lohara dynasty on Kashmir throne. Among the literateurs who received patronage of this court, were the celebrated poets Jalhana, Mankha and Kalhana.

Jalhana was a contemporary of Uccala. We learn from Mankha that when Sussala acceded to the throne after Uccala's death, he left the valley and went to the court of Rajapur (Rajauri). There he wrote a poem called Somapalvilasa on the history of king Somapala. His Mugdhopadesa is a poem ethical in character.

### KING JAYASIMHA (1128-1154 A.D.)

King Jayasimha succeeded to the throne of Kashmir in 1128 A.D. when the country was passing through one of the grim phases of civil war. His father, Sussala, had been killed



by disloyal elements in a fight and when the throne fell vacant there appeared no less than five pretenders to claim the right to rule. They were Lothana, Bhikshachara, Bhoja, Mallarjuna and Koshthana. Of these Bhikshachara had constantly harrassed Sussala as ruler and in 1121 A.D. had occupied the throne of Kashmir for nearly a year. But Sussala had finally regained the throne and had defeated enemy. Bikshachara did not leave hopes but was only finding an opportunity. Sussala's death and the confusion and disorder due to civil war had re-kindled his desire to seize the lost throne. Bhoja was the son of Salhana who sat on the throne for a few days after the death of Uccala. Other pretenders too were connected with the royal family and could claim to have been the heirs to the throne who had ruled Kashmir only for a short time.

After several skirmishes, Jayasimha, was successful in defeating Bhikshacara while he was holding the Lohara fortress. This fort he had occupied when he had been routed by Sussal. The royal forces laid a siege for months and forced him to fight inside the fort. It was an unequal battle in which Bhiksacara was defeated. But soon he made one more attempt to invade the valley. But this time from Pirpanchal side he was compelled to retire. Jayasimha was not pleased with the actions of Sujji, the commander and therefore was exiled. He joined the enemies camp. Bhiksacara attempted to regain the throne once more and invaded through Bansala (Banihal-route) and captured the fort there. Jayasimha's commander Laksmaka laid seige to the fort. Bhiksacara was killed in the fort along with many of his troops. The death of this eminent of the pretenders disheartened other claimants. The King Jayasimha adopted the policy of conciliation and appeasement and was able to bring under control Lothana, Mallarjuna and Koshthaka but Bojja proved very 'hard nut to crack'. He appeared a sworn enemy prepared to fight upto the last. King Jayasimha did not feel himself secure so long as Bhoja was alive.

Bhoja was courageous, self willed and self-respecting. He was supported in his fight by some disgruntled state officials and also the ruler of Dardistan (Gurez and Telail). Bhoja collected large troops and influential people under his flag. He had such an intelligence that he could see through the game. He came to know that he was used as a tool by some

Damara Chiefs who had their personal ambitions but he had his own self respect and did not yield Jayasimha and therefore civil war continued.

Jayasimha was a lover of peace. He wanted to establish tranquillity in the kingdom and also progressive regime for the welfare of his subjects. But his plans for this purpose could not be carried on so long Kashmir was in the midst of civil war. He pondered over the problem. At last an idea struck him, he thought of despatching a brilliant, capable, wise and skillful peace envoy to Bhoja Kalhanika with offers of friendship. She was the queen of Jayasimha. It was due to her dexterity that he was able to terminate the hostilities. She had elegant personality, refined manners, polished language and even charming rebukes worked, where all else had failed the king to attain his objective. She was beloved of the people, popular in the royal household, respected by the courtiers and admired by the politicians. She was free from pride which is common vice of the ladies of the royal house. Her mind was never upset, unbalanced and unhinged. She took sound decisions on affairs of the state after consultation with her trusted advisors. Jayasimha consulted her to express her views on the problem of civil war. She advised the king to take straight forward and magnanimous course. Bhoja was also grown sick of the civil war and wanted to end the hostilities. Queen Kalhanika got the best opportunity to end the warfare by offering liberal and magnanimous terms to the enemy. After her advice Jayasimha ordered the two courtiers—Dhanya and Rilhana to contact Bhoja and try to guess his intentions. They returned and reported the king the whole affairs. Now Jayasimha took a bold step and appointed Kalhanika as his plenipotentiary charged her with a mission of bringing end to the civil war. So says Kalhana who was contemporary and personal witness, "Dhanya having reported this straight forward conduct (of Bhoja) the serene king whose wits were not inexperienced then pondered over the completion of the pact for peace which had been imperilled and without revealing the decision or his state of mind to others he sent the queen on the journey to Taramulaka accompanied by the ministers. The despatch of the peace mission under the leadership of the senior queen was misconstrued by the enemies of Jayasimha as a sign of weakness; it emboldened the various



unfriendly elements to openly join the hostile camp. Influential and powerful Damara chiefs of Nilashva, Devasarsa (modern Devsora, Kulgam Tehsil) and Holda (Avantipora Tal) who had remained neutral until then precipitately sent offers of support to the prince and even despatched contingents of armed men to fight on his side as an earnest sign of their good faith and sincerity. That rendered the task of Kalhanika much more difficult.

Bhoja was delighted to learn that Queen was at the head of the mission and had been sent by the commands of the king. Bhoja had taken the control of Kishenganga valley including Karna district. Bhoja and his new allies were peace minded. No sooner had the Royal delegation arrived on the border than the enemy destroyed the bridge on the Jhelum river at Suyyapura (Sopur) and many of the hostile leaders waited in boats on Mahapadma (Wular lake) to defeat the royal army with its commanders as well as the two prominent members of the delegation, Dhanya and Rilhana. The Damara chiefs of Bangil (Gulmarg Area below Tangmarg) were thinking to invade Srinagar from Pattan side while those of Shamla were planning a raid from the side of Kshiptika (Katakuhl). Another Damara chief Trillaka had a sufficient following, and was trying to reach the banks of Tsunt Kuhl and the Damaras of Niloshava had designs to penetrate into the heart of Srinagar. The situation was aggravated and the whole state was in turmoil and the king was also himself in danger.

These Damaras were known as fuedal Barons who were little rajas in their little kingdoms. They had big missions and fortified castles to live in. They exercised authority in their districts and even in villages with the armies of their paid followers and secured from the attacks of the royal forces. They had always intrigued against their rivals or kings. They had overwhelmed the kingdom. Much has been said about these Damaras in the previous chapters. They had control over roads which were unsafe for travel. Famine and misery were order of the day.

These Damaras are now Dars and profess Islam as their faith.

In 1140 A.D. there were revolts in the Dard territory in the north and king Jayasimha had tried to profit after the



death of Yasodara. So in order to extend his influence he waged fruitless attempt to conquer this area. After Yasodara's death, Viddasiha had become the ruler of this area. Lothana, the old pretender was a refugee in the uphill track outside Kashmir, Joined in 1143 A.D. Alamkaracaka a powerful Damara in the district of Kamnah on the upper Kishen Ganga (now Neelam Valley). Relying on the help of the neighbouring Dards with whose chief he was conected by relationship, this cunning territorial baron rose in open revolt for Lothana's cause. The discontent spread from the Kishen Ganga Valley into Kashmir proper, and the danger of a general rising of the Damaras obliged Jayashima to take active measures for the capture of his rival. Lothana who was accompanied by Vigharaja a half brother of Jayasimha, and Bhoja, a son of king Salhana took refuge in Srihasilakotta, a hill castle of Alankaraka on the kishenganga. (This castle was near Sharda Tirtha) In this strong hold the position on rocky ridge some miles below sharda and close to the border or the Darda territory Lothana and his princely followers underwent a memorable seige. When Dhanya, Jayasimha's minister had overcome the serious difficulties to military operations on account of the climatic conditions, both Damara chiefs Alamkaracakara and Lothana became hostages and the royal troops took care to prevent their escape. After the seige had continued for some time, and food supplies of the defenders became exhausted, and even water became difficult, for access. Bhoja also became desperate in his attempts but failed. The hard pressed Damara agreed to purchase the raising up of the seige by delivering up Lothana and Vigharaja while he retained Bhoja. Thus these princes too came into power of Jayasimha, in 1144 A.D.

Bhoja managed to escape from the Damaras strongholds with a few followers, and after an adven terous journey across the snow covered mountains in the depth of winter reached the Darda territory in safety. The ruler of Darads Viddasiha had a pact with Bhoja and other Damaras like Trillaka and Catuska were in open revolt against Jayasimha. While the king's ministers were attempting to suppress the revolted barons and disorder was rapidly spreading throughout the kingdom, Bhoja approached from the north to claim crown.

He was accompanied by Darda king and muslim chiefs of the upper Indus. Rajavadana guided the invading force which reached unopposed in the vicinity of wular lake, second time. An ill advised attack of the Darads met with a defeat and produced confusion. Damara chiefs fled away to their native hills. This event took place in 1144 A.D. At the same time Rajavadan's initial success had distressed other Damaras and they put up another leader of the rebellion in Lonthaka son of Sussala's old adversary Prithvihara. His attack coming from the south of the valley seriously threatened Jayasimha but the efforts of the faithful minister Rilhana led to a defeat of the Damara just about the same time when Dards retreated.

Jayasimha seems to have secured peace for some years. He was endowed with many good qualities, politically astute and morally shrewd, he showed regard and consideration to all his loyal subjects. While he was respectful towards the learned and spiritually advanced he was kind and considerate to the poor and the needy. In this time the capital city which had suffered terrible disorder and disturbances during the time of his predecessors was built anew. For this purpose he permitted the free use of timber in the forests. He founded a new capital where he lived for rest of his days at Jayasimhapura (Simpur) village situated about five miles in the south east of Srinagar. He built a splendid Math and monastery excelling all the others and endowed it with many villages. This Math was built on the bank of river Jhelum. His pious wife Ratnadevi made a number of sacred foundations in different towns, and built a grand Vihara known as Vaikuntha Matha in the town which was named after her now known as Raitinpur in Pulwama Tehsil, 30 km. away from Srinagar. A large number of Shrines and Mathas were built by his ministers Rihana, Dhanya, Jalha, Alamkara, Duta and Mankhaka. Udaya the Commander in chief constructed a number of sacred buildings including a splendid Math on the shores of Wular Lake. Her brother Shringara built a Math, a garden and a tank along the eastern shore of the Dal Lake. He renovated the ancient temple Sureshvari which had been founded by king Avantiverman's minister Surya verman which is referred by Zoonraj to have existed on the Dal lake near the present Ishbar Village. He also erected Soma Tirtha near Vijaye-

shwar (Bijbehara) and brought water to it. He is credited to have built Soma Tirtha Somyar temple near Habba kadal Srinagar, which the people call it Somyur Ghat.

He is credited to have adorned Soma-Tirtha, a well known sacred site on the right bank of the Jhelum at Srinagar, just near Habba kadal bridge. The popular name of the ghat is Somyar. The tirtha is still extant and is sacred to the pandits of Srinagar. He furnished the shrine of Lord Shiva at Mameshvara with golden ornaments which is now Mamel at Pahalgam and is still extant and has a stone linked tank about twelve feet square receiving a spring. It is an attraction to the visitors and is under the State Archeological Department.

Jayasimha gave to his country much needed peace and good government and ushered in a period of great prosperity during which the country was able to recover from the wounds inflicted on it in the time of his unworthy predecessor. Kalhana says that inspite of floods and premature snowfalls there was sufficiency of food in the country and the people once again celebrated all the great festivals, the king sharing his treasure with them on such occasions. Kalahana bestows high praise on his minister. Bhuta founded the town of Bhuttapur full of Viharas and other buildings. Though the town has not been identified so far, I believe it is the present day Batapur village in the north of Dal Lake near Teilbal. It is beleived he also constructed a stream connecting Dal and Anchar lakes, known as Botakhul and it has a bridge over it which is still known as Buta Kadal. Ratnadevi the queen utilised her creative faculties in building public structures. She is credited to have constrtucted a Vihara which ranked first eminenc among the foundations of the town. She erected a gokula which eclipsed similar edifices of other countries; vast grazing grounds for cows were attached to the Gokula; A statue of noble bearing and marvellous beauty of Vishnu holding up mount Govardhana was erected in the premises. A temple built by the queen for conqueror of death (Mahadev) whitened by stucoo was simply brilliant. She founded also a flourishing town with many gates which is Darvabhishara (modern Bhimber). In this town she founded convents. She created various benefices in memory of loyal servants the chief of whom was her good natured chamberlain. Ratnadevi did not rob the royal treasury



for building works but she spent all the money out of her own private pocket. It is stated that she planned, supervised and executed the works herself and devoted her leisure entirely to the noble task.

In king Jayasimha's reign, wife of Minister Rilhana rebuilt the vihar of Ashoka which had been reduced and had left its name only. She added stone, residential quarters and other structures to it by building hostels for students, wells for travellers, water wheels for the needy public and like construction. The queen achieved glory and fame. Kalhana who was a personal witness says that Srinagar itself was beautified by the grandeur of the renovated vihara which occupied the entire elevated site on which stood the palace of former royal dynasty that is the left bank of Jhelum below Habba Kadal. She also consecrated to the divine Rudra the shrine named Rudreshwara with gold Amalasara. "The shrine is the ornament of Kashmir and the essence of the world beauty" says Kalhana, "Executed in white stone, gleaming like the nectar-giving moon it creates the impression, by its liveliness, as if Rudra the remover of the sufferings of poverty, were making the ocean of milk flow even to this day for the thirst of Upamanyu". Jayasimha is credited to have struck coins in Kashmir and one such copper coin dated 1149 A.D is available in Srinagar Museum.

#### **Jayasimha's relations with foreign countries :**

Jayasimha had established friendly relations with the neighbouring and distant kingdoms which Kalhana mentions and is attested by the descriptions of the poet Mankha who gives the account of the sabha, held by his brother, Alamkara. We had ambassadors from king of Kunauj (Knyakabja) whose name was Govind Chander and of Aparaditya, the sahara prince of Konkan. They are known to us from descriptions. Srinagar once again came to enjoy respect.

According to Jonaraj, the historian of 15th century Jayasimha lived up to 1154-55 A.D. It is said that during the early fifties of the 12th century he undertook a successful expedition against a muslim ruler who can not be indentified. He is known as Yavana (Tuska). During the reign of Jayasimha there flourished two eminent poets Mankha and Kalhana.

Mankha was a renowned poet. He wrote *Sri Kantha Charitam*. Kalahana writes that his book was recited in an assembly of poets and scholars. In the twelfth century Kashmir must have been a great centre of Sanskrit Learning. Kalhana Pandit the celebrated poet-historian of Kashmir was the son of a high functionary of the State. His father Canpak was the 'dvarapati' or Commandant of the frontier passes during the reign of king Harshdev (A.D. 1089-1101). Kalhana's ambition of life was to write a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir. When Jayasimha became king after the death of Sussala (A.D. 1127) Kalhana became his court-poet. He is the author of the celebrated Saga of Kashmir called "*Raj Tarangni*". According to the tradition Kalhana wrote another poem *Jayasimhabhyudaya* probably an eulogy of his patron, king Jayasimha of Kashmir. The book is not traceable but a verse from this poem has been quoted in *Ratnakatha-sarasamuccya*. Like Medieval Historians, he combined fact with fiction. He sincerely endeavoured to consult the varied sources of history. He was well versed in the literary and historical traditions of ancient India and was likewise an erudite scholar. Kalhana's earlier chapters are a medley of confused tradition and fanciful imaginations but he exercised independence of judgement combined with strict impartiality and unsparing criticism in regard to contemporary events and persons including King's officials and priests. In spite of all this, says Aurel Stein, "Kalhana must be treated with critical caution as his chronology is unreliable, his sources of information discrepant and his frame of mind didactic" To sum up though, that *Raj Tarangni* belongs both in form and in substance to the literature of artificial poetry, its merits as an historical composition are many and undoubted, says Dr. Goshal.

Though Kalhana does not say anything about his own caste, he seems to be a Brahman. His vast learning as expressed in the *Rajatarangini* accords well with the reputation generally enjoyed by the Brahmin pandits of Kashmir. Kalhana's sympathy towards the Brahmans, as revealed in the pages of the *Rajatarangini*, also tends to show that he was a Brahman. Every doubt in this regard is dispelled by Jonaraja, the writer of the *Dvitiya Rajatarangni*, who calls Kalhana

clearly as 'dvija'. Kalhana was a shaivite in his religious belief. In the *Rajatarangini* he pays his devotion in the opening verse of each taranga to the Lord Shiva and his consort Gauri.

His ancestors belonged to well to do family of Kashmiri Brahmins who were residents of Parihaspur now Paraspur village then capital of Kashmir and now included in Sonawari Tehsil.

### **The Rajatarangini**

The *Rajatarangini* was begun by Pt. Kalhana in 1148-49 A.D. and completed sometime in the following years. As R.S. Pandit says it was written about half a century before the reign of Prithvi Raj Chauhan and nearly two centuries before the advent of Shahmiris. It comprises eight books or tarangas. The first book deals with the Gonanda dynasty, several local rulers, Asoka and his successors, the Turuskas i.e. the Kushanas and the Huns. Book II treats of a line of Kashmir rulers, unconnected with Gonanda's dynasty. The third book begins with the restoration of the Gonanda dynasty and mentions several rulers among whom Pravarasena and per haps Toraman may be recognised as historical figures. Book IV starts with the accession of the Karkota dynasty. Some of the Kings belonging to this dynasty, are also known from their sources. The Karkot daynasty was overthrown by the Utpalas. The history of the Utpala dynasty is recorded in the fifth book of Kalhana. The sixth taranga of the *Rajatarangini* describes Kashmir under the descendants of Viradeva and Abhinava. The seventh book begins with the accession of Sangramraja of the Lohara kingdom to the throne of Kashmir and ends with the dethronement and death of Harshdev. The dynasty to which these rulers belonged is regarded as the first Lohara dynasty. The eighth book starts with the accession of the second Lohara dynasty and gives a long account of the reigns of Uccala, Sussala and Jayasimha, the reigning sovereign of Kalhana's time. *Rajatarangini* is simply a 'mahakavya'. It is an admirable collection of historical facts presented in an illuminating garb of poetry and soars in the region of fine art.

Kalhana generally indicates the materials which he used for his narrative. He mentions several previous writers on the



history of Kashmir. Among these were Suvrata 'Whose work,' he says, 'was made difficult by misplaced learning; Ksemendra who drew up a list of Kings Nrpavali, of which, no part was free from mistakes; Nilamuni, who wrote the Nilamatapurāṇa; Helaraja, who composed a list of Kings, in twelve thousand verses; and Srimihira or Padmamihira, and the author of Sri Chavillakara.' His own work was based on eleven collections of Rajakathas or stories about Kings and on the works of Nilamuni. He further tells us that he took the help of many inscriptions, grants and manuscripts to write his book.

He (Kalhana) himself tells us that he is uncertain about historical character. The early part of this book especially the first three books of the Rajatarangini have become a conglomeration of history and vague legends. The poet-historian, shows more precision from the fourth book onwards for which he had probably at his disposal, materials of a truly historical character, presumably coins and inscriptions, and other indigenous sources. The seventh and eighth books of the Rajatarangini are graphic and full of facts because Kalhana was a contemporary and eye witness of the Kings of the eighth book and for the history of Harshadev and other preceding rulers, he had most probably informations from his father and other older contemporaries.

Sir Aurel Stein's English translation of the Rajatarangini was published in 1904 though he completed it on 18 May, 1900. Sir Aurel Steins' method of translation says R.S. Pandit does not give an adequate conception of the Rajatarangini as literary composition to a reader who is unable to study the original. Sir Aurel Stein has committed to translate verses which he thought to be Kavya and which is unconnected with the narrative proper. Mr. Pandit (R.S.) therefore brought out a complete translation of Rajatarangini.

The first translation of a portion of the book was available in Persian under the orders of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin who named the version Bahrul Asmar or the sea of lakes. Akbar ordered Mulla Abdul Qadir Badaoni to revise this version and translate it completely. An abridged edition of the Rajatarangini in Persian was brought out by Haider Malik of Chadur during the reign of Jehangir in 1635 A.D. An edition of the Rajatarangini was published by the Royal Asiatic Society of

Bengal in Calcutta. This edition was based on the transcript obtained by William Moorcroft, a noted traveller who reached Srinagar in 1823 by the permission of Maharaja Ranjit Singh a part of whose dominion Kashmir then was. The first completed translation from the original Sanskrit appeared in French in 1852 under the auspices of society associated at Paris.

We realise the quantities of Kalhana more fully as we reach to his continuator, Jonaraj (Zoonraj).

Jayasimha died in 1154-55 and was succeeded by his son Paramanudev. With the assistance of officers Prayag and Janaka, he filled the treasury and accumulated a big treasure in his possession. He had an uneventful reign. From now onwards we have to depend for historical information on the accounts given by Jonaraj, historian of 15th century who was asked by Sultani Zanol-Abdin to fill the gap from 1148 A.D. to 1420 A.D. Jayasimha ruled for 22 years (1149-1150 A.D.) Thus our great historian Kalhana closes his illustrious work in about 1149 A.D. when he was in an advanced age of 50 years. But from the later historian we learn Jayasimha ruled five years more, during which he started on expeditions against muslim ruler of the North. Jonaraj has dealt with the reigns of Jayasimha's successors in a very nut-shell manner. All his successors upto the establishment of the Muslim rule proved worthless rulers. They were down right idiots and worthless mere puppets. He was succeeded by Pramamaka or Biyavarimal Chander known otherwise passed away in 1164-65 A.D. He was a tyrant and often harassed his subjects. He neglected the duty of protecting his subjects. He left behind him one lakh and seven thousand dinars. He was succeeded by his son Venti Dev who ascended the throne in 1164-65 A.D.

### VENTI-DEV (1164 to 1180 A.D.)

He was elected the ruler by the citizens of Kashmir as a suitable heir was not available. He was a perfect foolish king and introduced foolish schemes and measures. The valley again plunged into chaos and disorder. Due to famines and diseases people died like flies. Damara—Levanyas now dominated the Government and became king makers. The ruler was a

mere puppet in their hands. They brought their own nominee Opyadev who ascended the throne in 1180 A.D. He has been described as the very model of dunce. Lavanays established themselves as the real rulers of the land. Once he was having a boat-ride in the Dal-lak and saw his face in the water and seeing on it he laughed loudly and became enraged and slapped his face in the water. Once this foolish king felt happy at the sight, says Jonoraj, of large blocks of stone and ordered his ministers to increase the size of smaller ones by making them drink the milk of the beast. On another occasion while going in a boat through the Dal-lake to attend the Sureshvari temple situated on the eastern bank, his jewel fell in the water from his finger when asked where the royal jewel seal was, he pointed to the ripple of the water. Thus he was a model of a dunce. He died after the reign of nine years. He was succeeded by his brother Jassak.

### **JASSAK**

(A.D. 1180 to 1198 A.D.)

He was also a worthless ruler and became a mere puppet in the hands of Damaras and Levanas. They had their own axe to grind. They exploited the kingdom for their own interest. The king did not wish to have on him the weight of the kingdom. Two brahman brothers Kushk and Bhima earned the affection of the king by fraudulent means and assumed great powers and refrained from capturing the crown only due to fear of fuedal lords (Damars-Lavanyas). They had ammassed great wealth and fortune during this period. Kshuka's wife killed her husband by poison. She had become disgusted owing to his old age who had lost his vigour. She had developed her intimacy with her husband's brother Bhima. His body came to be marked with white patches and her son was lightended by her gifts to Mahadev and other Gods. Throughout this period we see instability in the kingdom. No work of public utility was executed. Jassak died after a reign of 18 years and 10 months in the year 1198 A.D. and the throne was occupied by his son Jagadev.



**JAGADEV**

(1198 A.D. to 1212-13 A.D.)

This king was very powerful yet very humble humane and enlightened despot. He streamlined the administration and introduced some reforms for the welfare of his subjects. People of Srinagar hailed him as their lord. He curbed the activities of fuedal lords (Damaras-Lavaynas). Bureaucratic officials started conspiracy against the king. He looked with an equal eye on the servants of the State. He was well versed in science and as a surgeon extracts a dart, he revolted at the laws of the country. He improved some out-dated laws. He exiled some of the rebel ministers. He was a person of great merit-who according to Jonoraj penetrated like a dart in the minds of men. He was the last king of ancient period who struck coins in the valley (Kashmir). One of such coins is available in Srinagar museum, dated 1198 A.D. The fuedal lords in league with Kayastha official did not approve his policy of reform and rose in revolt and succeeded in driving the king out of the valley. But Jagadev with the timely help of his minister Gunakara-Rahula regained the throne. He did not protect the interests of barons so they were eager to do harm to the king. The king conquered the whole kingdom and enjoyed the fortune that smiled on him. The king built a temple at Rajjya-Pur and adorned with a silver umbrella. He was very popular and loved by his subjects and was called Jagadev Datta (benevolent). A minister known as Padam who was appointed as Davarpati or Lord of the gate pretending affection for the king as if he were a friend but had intention to capture the throne secretly gave him poison and killed him in 1212 A.D. The people were grieved and lamented. He ruled for 14 years, six months and three days. He was succeeded by his son Rajdev (Razadev).

**RAJDEV (RAZDEV)**

1212-1235 A.D.

He had gone to Kashtavata (Kishtwar) in fear on the death of his father and was brought back by the enemies of the lord of Davara (Padma). After his return there again

started a civil war in the valley and the power thirsty Padma, Lord of the gate besieged a fort Salhana. Padma surrounded him with troops. He had in the meanwhile received a present of "curious pair of shoes and in his curiosity to see it, he was off his guard and was killed by a chandal (low caste) in a scuffle. Rajadev was appointed and acclaimed as the king of Kashmir by the Bhattas or Brahman corporation (Pandit Baradari) of Kashmir with the sound of kettle, drum and conch shell and innumerable lords (feudatory chiefs) bound to him and he bestowed favours on them. Lavanaya—Damaras had again dominance in the administration as before and the king maintained a good relation with them for some time but they along with Pandit Baradari fell out. Pandit (Bhattas) entered in to league with the ruler of Lohara Balahya Chandra who invaded the valley and occupied half of Srinagar and the king failed to subjugate them. This enraged the king and he started to harass and plunder the pandits. He persecuted them to such a pass that every pandit of the valley was heard to cry when threatened with an attack by the agents of the king, "I am not a bhatta, I am not a bhatta (Pandit)—nabhatta." Bhatta means in Kashmir a pandit or a brahman. This is a great act of wickedness when pandits of the valley have been persecuted by their own co-religionist and the blame is sometimes thrust on the ancestors of muslims even by muslim historian who wished to please Dogra ruler. "Islam spread in Kashmir by and large by persuasion and peaceful means....." "Bhat Hasti Ha-Sha Man But-naistum ..Bhato...nabh. The aggressor Baladhi Chander built a Matha in the city and was named after him probably in the vicinity of the present village of Bala-hom 9 K.Ms. in the south of Kashmir. Pandits now started to find a new ruler with a mild temper among the Kasha Tribe whom they would elect king of the Kashmir. But shortly after Rajdev died, after the most disturbed and inglorious reign of 23 years and three months and 27 days. Rajdev signalled his prosperity by building Rajpuri Rajalak. After his death his son Sangramdev ascended the throne of Kashmir.

**SANGRAMDEV**

(A.D. 1235-1252)

He was a very powerful King and had a strong will to establish his rule. He was determined to crush the power of feudal lords-Damara Lavanayas. He terrified his enemies but could not succeed due to the treachery of his brother Surya who created obstacles in his plans. When the king came to know of it, Surya ran away from Srinagar to Lohara (Poonch and Rajauri) and raised a banner of revolt against Sangramdev. In this task he was helped by the Damara Chief Tunga of Samala (Hamal area, now Rafiabad, Handwara Tehsil). In the battle that ensued, the Damara Chief Tunga was defeated and the ruler of Lohara Chandra was slain. Surya King's brother and conspirator was captured and was caused to be killed by the king. During this civil war the barons were brought under submission but the sons of Kohhan began to assert themselves and the king began to fear them. Damara again began to suck the blood of the people. The kingdom was devoured by the Damaras for a long time and he ran away from the valley and took shelter with the peaceful lord of Rajpuri (Rajauri). During the king's absence from the valley anarchy and disorder became the order of the day and ultimately Sangramdev returned from Lohara and was successful in crushing his enemies and regained the throne of Kashmir. Kohan's sons who were behind the conspiracy to kill him hatched a plot and assassinated him in 1252. Sangramdev had constructed his grand palace for his residence in Baldi-mar Mohalla (now Bulbul Lanker, Srinagar). At Vijayeshwer (modern Bijbehara) he built a house named Shri Vishala containing twenty one rooms for the habitation of cows and Brahmans. It is said that Sangramdev was a great general of repute. He had defeated Balachandar at the Gagangir-fort (Tehsil : Ganderbal) who had taken shelter in it. He also had brought the ruler of Baltistan under his control, when his forces invaded Skurdu the capital of Baltistan. He had acknowledged to pay Nazrana to the ruler of Kashmir.

**RAMDEV**

(1252-1273)

Sangramdev was succeeded by his son Ram Dev. He took



stern action against the enemies of his father—and got them executed one by one. It is said that he was a capable ruler and ruled the kingdom effectively with the help of his minister Prithiviraj. He entrusted the duty of governing the people to him. He is believed to have built a grand fort at Sallara (modern Sallar), on the right bank of Lidder, Anantnag. It was marked by his name and was like a monument of his fame. Preparations were made for subjugation of Samal (present Hamal or Rafiabab) and brought it under his control. He renovated the Vishnu temple at Utpalpora which had been broken during the civil war. He had no male issue and had adopted a certain Brahman boy as his own son and heir. He belonged to Bhishauja Kapura. The strong affection that existed between the king and his adopted child was like that of a father. His queen Shrimati Sumadra was devoted to Brahmanism, and she built a grand Matha on the right bank of river Jhelum, which was named after her name.

### LAKSHMENADEV

(1273-1286 A.D.)

The successor of Ramdev now his adopted son ascended to the throne of Kashmir. He was a man of learning and had mastery over six branches of learning. He, as already mentioned before was a Brahmin by birth but was made a Kshatriya but did not part with his own caste. Mahila the queen built a new Matha marked with her name on the bank of the Jhelum by the side of her mother-in-law's Matha. There is no detailed account of his reign in the chronicles of Kashmir. During his reign a visitor named Kuchal entered Kashmir. He was a magician and established his headquarters on the slopes of Shankeracharya hill. It is said that he belonged to a Muslim tribe and during the civil war which started during his time Lakshmenadev was killed in 1286 A.D. and now two Damara Lords Sangram Chand and Simhadev of Dachainpur (Anantnag) and Lahara (Lar, Ganderbal Tehsil) dominated the administration of the state. Abul Fazal describes Simhadev as the chief of Dachanpur (Dachanpur is the right bank of the Lidar river from Phalgam to modern Tral). After the death of Sangramchand, Simhadev declared himself the king

of Kashmir. But Abul Fazl believes that so long as Sngram lived his power was confined to Dachanpur. During his reign the kingdom of Kashmir had shrunk to its former size.

## SIMHADEV

(1286 to 1301 A.D.)

During this time the valley was ruled first by Sangramchand and then by Simhadev. He is credited to have built many temples and other religious foundations. He built a Matha within the city. He associated himself with the religious preceptors and established an image of Ned Simha at Dhyano-dara. The image set up and the king, say the Chronicles who set it up, the preceptor who helped him in the act and the constellation under which the act was done all bore the name of the lion.

One day the king caused the God of Vijeshwara to be bathed in milk purchased with one Lakh pieces of gold, and thus attained purification by his religious act. Shanker Swamin was the religious preceptor of the king and gave him as a free gift, the Lordship over 18 Mathas. When the king rose from his bed he chanted the following verses.

I bow to Shanker, Lord whose eyes are as pure as fire.

Whose feet are worshipped by the learned.

And who is bedecked with crescent of the moon.

A verse such as this smoothed his path to the future world, and liked an offering to the goddess of speech instructed the soul. Once upon a time the King passed orders to punish for his daughters civil character but revoked those orders at the request of Idgali a dancing girl. This event has occurred in 1301 A.D.

During the later years of rule the king fell in company of badmen and thus he lost faith in God. His nurse had a beautiful daughter and the king began to maintain illicit relations. Her husband Darya with the help of Kumasuha (Muslim) killed the king. His subjects had also become annoyed and wanted to get rid of him. The king reigned for 14 years. According to Hassan, Shankercharya, a Hindu reformer arrived in the Valley at this time and began to preach Hinduism at the foot of Takhti Sulaman. Often he was

engaged in heated discussions with the Buddhist Scholars so much that Buddhism now lost the patronage of the king—and could not stand before the onslaught of this reformer. Both Simhadev and Sangramdev received the reformer and hence Shaivism became dominant and supreme in the valley.

## SUHADEV

(1310 A.D.—1320 A.D.)

After Simhadev his brother Suhadev became the ruler of Kashmir. He was a capable and a powerful ruler and established his authority with the help of a muslim named Kamusuha over the whole kingdom of Kashmir. He was of active habits. He led an expedition towards Panjgabal situated in the east of Rajauri and brought the whole area under his control. The rule of Suhadev is a turning point in the history of Kashmir. Many people from various quarters arrived in the valley and resorted to the king for service. The most notable figures are Shahmir from Swat Valley and Lachen Gyalbu Rinchan from Western Tibet i.e. Leh which finally resulted in the overthrow of Hindu Rule in Kashmir and establishment of muslim rule under the dynasty known as Shahmiri dynasty. His son Vabhruvahana built the town of Garbhapura. The author believes it the present village of Garbharpur in tehsil Pulwama, on Srinagar shopian road mile 26. During the reign of Suhadev, the valley seems to have enjoyed an era of peace and prosperity. It was due to the muslim immigrant from swat valley (Shahmir) that Suhadev was able to establish authority and control through out the length and breadth of Kashmir. The later part of Suhadev's reign was disturbed by a foreign invasion as already discussed some where also in the book. By the time Suhadev ascended the throne the muslims had already settled in the valley and many more had come under Islamic fold by the peaceful propagation of Sayyid Sharaf Uddin Bulbul Shah Pandits and Budhists of the valley had grown so "Sterile, stale and unresponsive" that they needed to be revolutionised. Only a spark was needed that was the faith of prophet Ibrahim which had already taken position in the valley.

The two foreign invasions that played havoc with the



local population during this period were one under Zuljoo or Zulkadar Khan, and the other under the command of Qaan. Already when Mohd. of Gaznavi had attempted to get the control of the valley, he had retreated from Loharkot which guarded the Tosa maidan route to the valley and had already brought culture and civilization which had great impact on the minds of kings like Anantdev, Kalashdev and Harshdev. Now invaders belonged to the Monghol tribe and were brutes and savages. They were not Muslims but believed in Pagan rites (Lamaism) to which their ancestor Changez Khan had followed. The first invasion was during the reign of Ramdev by Munkoo or Qaan. His troops destroyed standing crops, houses looted property and killed innocent young and old. Ramadev could not bear to see his subjects being butchered before his very eyes. As already said he was succeeded by Lakhshmandev under the orders of Qaan and Halaku Khan the monghol invaders. The next invasion occurred in 1319 A.D. when Zuljoo a Tartar cheiftan from central Asia swooped upon the valley with his 70,000 armed men through Jhelum valley road. He let loose tyranny, fire and sword to the every nook and corner of the valley. He tortured every one whom his troop captured. Instead of opposing the enemy Suhadev fled to Kishtwar along with his family leaving his subjects to its fate like Maha-Raja Hari Singh, the fourth Dogra ruler of our own day in 1947 A.D. Ramchand, his commander managed the state of affairs. Zaljoo stayed for 8 months in the valley and decided to leave for want of food. Via Pir panchal (Devsar pass) carried with him about 50,000 Kashmiris as captives. He could not run away from the nature's wrath. It was the month of December, a severe snow storm overtook his army and captives. Here at Khuri Bhatpur (Kulgam Tehsil) he perished and the locals still call it Bhatgaji. After his death Kashmir became almost like a region before the creation, a "vast field without food and grass". Hassan Gamroo on the authority of Jonraj bewails the consequences of loot and destruction. Only hundred men were seen in distress. These men re-built their fallen habitation while there were only 11 persons who resumed the work of reconstruction in the city. There is still a saying among the Pandits of the valley that there was a time when 11 families were spared. Some of them

hold muslims responsible for this barbarous act which is historically baseless and concocted. Citizens of Srinagar sought shelter in the mountain caves and ruins and some fled towards Gilgit Tibet and Kishtwar, while aged men and women died in the way. Whatsoever prosperity Kashmir had enjoyed during the Sahadev's reign was destroyed by Zuljoos invasion. Full prosperity and peace was restored only when Shah Miri dynasty was established in Kashmir. As the Mongol invaders having disappeared from Kashmir, the effects of their violence became quite evident. The administration was paralysed and there was no one to look after public affairs. At this time invasion of Zuljoo was followed by a third invasion led by Bhautta Rinchan who was the son of a Ladakhi chief whose father was killed by Balti in a war. Rinchan succeeded in avenging the death of his father by killing a number of Baltis. He fled from Ladakh and entered Kashmir through Zojila pass. On reaching the village Gagingir (Tehsil Ganderbal), he was permitted to settle there. During Zuljoo invasion Rinchan had stayed at Gagyangair and had obtained the service under Ram Chand who made him responsible for law and order. In due course of time he grew influential and won the hearts of people. He now aspired for the throne of Kashmir. He keenly watched the situation and marked the pace of development. According to prof. M. Hassan, he was not strong enough to fight Ram Chand in open. He decided upon a ruse. He sent his Ladakhi followers in the guise of merchants selling woollen clothes to the town of Lar (Lahara). One day they entered the fort under the pretext of trade with their weapons and killed Ram Chand's men and he also was killed. His son Rawan Chand was taken prisoner. He was now strong enough to occupy the vacant throne and release Rawan Chand and conferred on him the jagir of Lar and province of Ladakh. He then married Rawan chander's sister Kota Rani, thus making him forget the murder of his father. He made Rawan Chander his prime Minister and appointed Shah Mirza as his commander in chief. In the mean while Suhadev returned from Kishtwar and claimed the throne but was repulsed and finally returned to Kishtwar. The other danger was from the Lavanyas who had played the part of king makers and had now refused to acknowledge Rinchan as



ruler. He suppressed them completely and in this way he established full authority over the whole valley. Richan was originally a Buddhist. His wife was a Hindu. This created confusion in his mind. Hinduism did not appeal to him. Because of its caste ridden rules and the arrogance of Brahmans. He passed sleepless nights weeping and praying to god to guide him to the right path. At last he came in to contact with Sayyid Sharffuddin known by us as Bulbul Shah who had come to Kashmir to reign of Suhadev from Turkistan with one thousand fugitives from the Mongol invasion. Richen was much impressed by his teachings which were simple, free from ceremonies, caste and priest hood that he became a muslim and adopted the name of Sadruddin. Richen's rule was harsh and stern. He was firm and rested on law. He was able and energetic and tried to give peace and order. He remained on the throne for a short time and died in 1323 A.D. He was buried near the hospice built for his pir Bul Bul Shah on the banks of Jhelum in Bulbul lanker Locality. He also built the first Jama Masjid in Kashmir near Ali Kadal which is now under the control of state Archeology and is known as Rainten masjid. Kota Rani became now the virtual ruler and Richen's son Haidar was a minor under the Guardianship of Shah Mir. Kota Rani on the advice of Shah Mir and other nobles of the land recalled Udendev brother of Suhadev from swat valley where he had been living since Zuljoo's invasion, made him king and married him.

Udendev was cowardly, incompetant but the administration was in the hands of Kota Rani. Udendev's reign was brief. One more mughol invasion took place in his time under Qurdal from Turkistan. The invaders entered Kashmir through Hurpur and the ruler fled to Ladakh through the mountaneous terrain of Zojila. He had become terror stricken but Kota Rani did not lose heart. She bravely resolved to organise resistance to the invaders. She called upon the refractory chiefs to gird up their lions, and fight enemy. Her appeal had a great effect and therefore campaign against the mongols was conducted vigorously and they were compelled to withdraw. After their withdraw Udendev returned from Ladakh. He now retired from politics and began to lead secluded life. Kota Rani was the real ruler. Udendev died in 1338 A.D



but Kota Rani did not reveal his death till she consolidated her position. She had two sons one from the first husband and Rinchan who was kept under the charge of shahmir and the other was by Udendev who was kept under the guardianship Bhatta Bhiksana but her position was threatened by her son's (Haider) tutor Shah Mir. In order to be safe from the danger of Shah Mir she shifted her capital from Srinagar to Jayapur now Anderkot. She was defeated and Sultan-Shahmir became the ruler of Kashmir, with a title of Shamsuddin. This change over established the Muslim rule in Kashmir which lasted for 700 years. Thus the Hindu rule came to an end in the twenties of 14th century. Kota Rani died in 1339 A.D.

Sir Mark Aurel Stein.

At the end of pre-Islamic History of Kashmir it would be quite in the fitness of things to give a brief life sketch of the late Sir Mark Aurel Stein who translated the Raja Tarangni of Pandit Kalhan Misri and to whom we are indebted in more than one way. The late Sir Mark Aurel Stein K.C.I..E.F.B.A. correspondant de-Institut de-France Pb. Dr. of Literature (Hon Oxon) D.Sc. (Hon. Camb.) D.O.L. (Hon. Punjab) retired as officer on special duty to the Indian Archeological survey in 1929. He was born at Budapest (Hungary) on 26th November 1862. Sir Aurel was educated in Budapest and Dresden Public Schools and studied oriental languages and antiquities in Veinna and Tubingn Universities and in England. While principal Oreintal College. Lahore and Registrar Punjab University (1889—99) Sir Aurel carried on antiquaries researches in Kashmir and edited and translated Kalhan's Raja Tarangni. Sir Aurel was appointed to the India Educational Service at Calcutta Madras in 1889. He worked as Archeologist for the Government of India in Sinkiang (Then Chinese Turkistan) in 1900—1. He also worked as Inspector General of Education N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan. Sir Aurel was engaged during 1906-8 in Archeological and Geographical exploration in Central Asia and W. China when he was awarded the Royal Geographical societies' Gold Medal 1909. Sir Aurel was transferred to the Archeological survey of India in 1910 and carried out Geographical and Archeological exploration in Central Asia and Iran during 1913-16. He died in Kabul in 1943 and is burried

there. Sir Aurel was made K.C.I.E. in 1912. Sir Aurel has written more than his size that is to say, his stature. Mohan Marg above Ganderbal was his favourite resort in summer, while Nageen near Dal Lake was his winter residence. His main works are:—

1. Raja Tarangni 2 Volume translation.
2. Ancient Khutan.
3. Ser India
4. Geography of Jammu & Kashmir.

It was his last wish that he should be buried in the valley of Kashmir at Mohan Marg which has not been fulfilled so far.

#### **Administrative Set Up in Ancient Kashmir :**

Nothing definite is known of the administrative machinery of Kashmir as it worked in the dawn of History. There is no inscription which can be utilized to trace the origin and development of its administrative machinery. All that we have in case of Kashmir are a few literary sources which are not in detail regarding the administration of the country. If Huiyen Tsang and Kalhana are to be believed Kashmir was part of Ashoka's empire. It is possible that Mauryan system of administration was introduced which was in vogue during the time of our poet historian Kalhana. He gives credit to the introduction of new administrative measures in Kashmir not to Ashoka but to his son Jaluka in about 3rd century before Christ. The government of Kashmir was of the same type as those of other states. Before Jaluka's time the government of Kashmir was run by seven chief officials. The Judge, the revenue superintendent, the treasurer, the Commander of the army, the envoy, the priest and the astrologer. With the extension of Ashoka's empire to Kashmir we have first of all the office of Kingship which was hereditary. According to Kalhana the king was the divine origin. He was part and parcel of Lord Shiva.

*Kasmirah parvati tatra raja gneyo haramsajah  
Navagneyah sa dustohapi vidusa bhutimicchata*

(R.T....I, 72)

The Nilamatapurana expresses the same view:  
Kasmirayam tatha raja tvaya jneyo haramshajah  
Tasyavajni na kartavya satatam bhutim icchata.  
(Nilmata)

He had absolute powers. According to Buddhists he was hailed as the Lord and was called Sarva Mahasakay. He could not be hurt by a man. He is also the source of all light. Though he was regarded as a part and parcel of God and also in theory his powers were unlimited. There was always some sort of practical check over his authority. The first check was applied by the Chief Minister and other ministers whose will the king could not wholly ignore. If Kalhana is to be believed their opinion was to be solicited in case of the selection of a new monarch. The king had to be humble and modest, well-versed in sacred and secular lore. He received his training for the high office from his childhood when he held the position of Yuvaraj. The king was certainly the chief patron of the state of the society, of the religion and of the culture but he did not create them. He was throughout guided by the age old customs, usages and traditions. He was not allowed to be autocrat. If the king was weak or ineffective, the prime minister (Mukhi-Mantri)/(Sarvadhkara) dictated the policy of the state and exercised the supreme power of the government. We have several instances of kings being placed on the throne of Kashmir either by the council of ministers or by committee of nobles and Brahmins (Pandit corporation). In the 6th century A.D. at least two kings Magghavahna and Matrigupta were placed on the throne of Kashmir by the council of ministers. Before his death king Yassakara in 939 A.D. had to consecrate Varnta as king with the approval of his ministers. During the reign of queen Didda 980 A.D. we find Brahmins holding fast for removing Tunga, (Sarvaadkar) — the prime minister from his office. Next comes the council of ministers which had to assist the king in the work of administration. The prime minister was most important and powerful. His position was "above anybody" and was directly chosen by the ruler. Next in rank was the minister incharge of revenue administration known Grahkritiyadekaran (Revenue minister) was appointed direct by the king himself. This post was created by Sankar Verman in 883 A.D. and was the most important office. It was the



highest ambition of revenue officer to get this post. He had under him the official treasurer and five secretaries called Divars-Devarpati was the lord of the gate. He was incharge of the defence of the passes leading to the valley. All domestic expenses such as grants to temples, Brahmins, the poor, the strangers, grants for the fodder of domestic animals and salaries of the royal servants could be incurred with his (Grehkritikaryan) consent. Maharaja Jalaukh had increased the number of departments (Karmastanas) into eighteen and had by this act inaugurated the constitutional system of Mahabharta. Kalhan Pandit is silent about the names of 18 offices which were created by Asoka's son. Some scholars think that these 18 offices evidently correspond to court officials mentioned in Mahabharta. These were the councillor, the purohita, heir apparent, Generalissasomo, ChamberLane, Steward of the royal household, superintendent of prisons, treasurer, auditor of the treasury, official with judicial functions. Engineer of works, Lord Chief Justice, President of the Assembly, Criminal jurisdiction, Warden of Fortification and conservator of Forests. The king presided over all these departments. This system continued till the time of Lalitadatiy 700 A.D. who created five new departments—Karminstanas : panchmahabbha was an officer of high status—he was minister for peace and war who drafted and signed the treaties on behalf of the king and the other was that of the city perfect known as Nagara-dhehrtta who was incharge of the adminsitration and defence of the towns and the cities. There was the Office of the Minister in waiting (Padagar) which were combined with the duties of revenue collection and finance adminsitration. The accountant general (Aksapalala) also functioned as Officer in charge of Land Grants which were executed by the recorder of official documents (Pattopadhyaya), and that the Ekanga soldiers were appointed in this office from which they received their pay. Lalitaditya's grandson Jayapida added two more offices to the existing administrative machinery. One of these was the department of justice (Dharmadhikarana) and the other was the office of the Calaganja (Moving Tresury). The creation of a mobile exchequer became necessary to serve on expeditions when the kings own treasury (Ganja) was far away. Shanker-verman created two new departments. The first was charged

with the share of the Law of markets (*Attapatibhaga*) and with the collection of taxes on market shops etc. The second office (*Grhakatya*) concerned with the domestic affairs was placed in charge of a treasurer through whom Shankerverman collected profits arising from the sale of incense, Sandalwood and other articles of worship from the Temple's on the plea that they were the King's Legal share of selling price. He even plundered straightaway sixty three temples on the same pretext.

From ancient times Kashmir was divided into two principle administrative division:—Kamraz and Maraz which has been referred in Sanskrit texts as *Kramarajya* and *Madavarajya*. At present Kamraz comprises the areas on both sides of river Jhelum below Srinagar while Maraz comprises those above it. In the Lohara period (10th century A.D.) one more mountain district called Lohara Kingdom was added to the kingdom of Kashmir. This mountain district is immediately adjoining Kashmir in the south-west and is now Poonch district. This district was brought under the control of Kashmir on account of Keshmagupta's union with queen Didda in the middle of 10th century which continued down to the times of Kalhana 12th Century and later. These districts were further sub-divided into several Tehsils called Visaya. According to Lokaprakasha, Kashmir was sub-divided into 27 Tehsils (*Visayas*). District was in charge of a Governor called *Mandalesha* who was responsible for the administration of the whole district. The Tehsil or *Vesaya* was in charge of *Margapati* (*Tehsildar*). His function was the supervision of visaya and villages lying within it, checking of their accounts and inspection of roads. He also appears to be an executive officer to decide civil and Criminal cases. The village administration was carried on by the *Gramadivira*. His duty was to maintain records showing the area of the holding of the villagers with their revenue, assessment etc. According to Kshemendra he could be appointed and suspended by *Margapati*. He is the official ancestor of our present *Patwari*. Next to *Gramadivira* was *Sandekas*. He is the village Head man of Modern *Muqaddam* or *Lambardar* who was responsible for the collection of revenue and other cesses and had to work after the welfare of the village. He held his office at the will of *Margapati* and paid bribes to him for retention of the post. Since old days he has been an important factor in rural



administration. These posts existed since ancient times. Their salary was paid out of the contributions made by the villagers. Lastly to man the efficient administration in the government there evolved a highly trained class of civil servants known as Kayasthas. The career of the Kayasthas was opened to all castes and classes of population as some believe except Brahmins. A kayasthas (Civil Servant) drew his salary from the royal Treasury monthly and according to Kalhana due to the efficiency of this class in the day-to-day administration, the king could raise taxes and would look at their faces for their guidance and direction. They were lions under the throns. Some times kings like Uccala adopted severe measures to curb the corrupt practices of the civil servants and even terminated their services. Kayastha became indispensable and gained in power and prestige. In the end the administrative set up of Kashmir was well developed, well organised and efficient. Officers of the state were generally honest and dutiful. We had efficient system of executive, revenue and judicial administration and smooth government was maintained throughout. We have no reference that the rulers of ancient Kashmir bestowed favours on their kith and kin.

### Political Divisions of Pre-Islamic Kashmir

The valley of Kashmir has from very early times been divided into two principle administrative divisions known by these modern names—Kamraz and Maraz. The terms have been referred in Sanskrit texts as Kramrajya and Madavarjya found frequently in Raj Tarangni. According to prevailing notions Kamraz comprises the land on both sides of the river Jhelum below Srinagar while Maraz comprises those above viz present day part of Srinagar and the whole of Anantnag districts. The present tradition places the boundaries of two great divisions more accurate at the shergārhi palace. Abul Fazal's Aini Akbari informs us that the whole kindoms was divided under its ancient rulers in to two divisions. Maraz in the east and Kamraz in the west. He then proceeds to tabulate thirty eight parganas into which Kashmir was divided under Akbar's administration. The city of Srinagar was counted in Maraz and third mountain district called Loharin comprised



the mountain district immediately adjoining Kashmir valley in the south-west and now included in the Poonch and Rajuri districts of Jammu province. Kshemagupta's union with queen Didda brought Kashmir under the rule of Loharas which continued to hold Kashmir as well as its original home down to the times of Kalhana and later. It continued under the sultanate period and was governed from Srinagar through a governor even upto 1530 A.D. when we find sultan Mohamad Shah collecting taxes from the same district (Lohara)

The whole valley had from early date been subdivided for administrative purposes into considerable number of small units known as *Vesayas* and *pargan* later on and at present they are termed as *Tehsils*. How many *Visyas* there were, we are not certain. *Lokaprakash* tells us of the Division of Kashmir into twenty seven *tehsils* and enumerates some nineteen of the later. But several of these are so corrupt as to be beyond our recognition when others bear a distinctly modern look.

Abul Fazal's account is the first which presents us with a systematic statements of Kashmir *parganas*. It is of special interest because it shows how the list could be increased or re-adjusted within certain limits according to fiscal requirements or administrative finances. According to him odd number of *parganas* was thirty-eight, while the earlier one of Qazi Ali was forty-one, then there were changes during Mughals and Pathan times. After the conquest of the valley by the Sikhs in 1819 A.D. they reduced to these thirtysix and changed their names and extent as observed by William Moorcraft in 1819 and Hugel (Baron-von) in 1835 then under the Dogra Rule the *Tehsils* were again re-distributed on the fashion of British Provinces., and their number was eleven. But in their constitution little regard was paid to the historical division of the country. From the *Lokaprakash* it is evident the ancient Kashmir possessed a far greater population. It help us to explain the curious traditional verse which puts the number of villages in pre-historic times to 66063. Even much later during 16th century, Mirza Haidar Dughlat records that the whole province—plains and mountains together comprised one lakh villages, Jonaraja give figure 60,000. The decline began in the late Mughal and Pathan periods. However there is a mention of

nineteen visayas (Tehsils) including Lohara district. The reason is I believe villages became deserted due to appalling famines and epidemics which brought terrible havoc in the mass of rural population. Among tehsils in Maraz, Kalhana mentions only a few important tehsils namely Khuduvi, Holda, Karala and Devsarasa. Dr. Stein, an eminent indologist has identified Khuduvi with the present village of Khrew situated in the south-east of Srinagar 20 kilometres away. Here was a tehsil headquarter where different officials had their official residences. This tehsil was burnt down by Damaras (Hindu fuedal tribes) of Padamapora (Pampur) during the later civil wars.

From the passage of Kalhana's Raj Tarangni there seems to be a tehsil at Holda from which is believed the town of present Awantipor was not far away. Damaras of Holda and Khaduvi lived side by side and during the reign of Jaya-Simha, Damaras besieged the tehsil head quarters and burnt down the town alongwith Avantiswami temple whose ruins are still extant on the road side.

Devsaras is mentioned as an important tehsil in present Devsar area which adjoins Shahbad Doru in the west. It is a tract in alluvial plain drained by the Vishow Nallah and is often mentioned in Raj Tarangni'. Its important village is Qazi Gund at present.

Zonaraj and Srivar mentions one more tehsil in its neighbourhood by the name of Karala, Kalhana is silent about its location. They place it the present village of Zainpur founded by the Sulan Zyn-al-abi-din, popularly known as Budshah or the great king. This Tehsil headquarter was situated on an alluvial plateau, south of Rembeeyar river eight kilometres away from Bijbehara in the west.

Jonaraj furnishes us the information of several more tehsils of ancient Kashmir situated in Maraz in addition by those given by Kalhana. These are Vama-Parsava referred by Jonaraj meaning 'left side'. It is modern Khovurpur, the area of Lidder river on the left side and comprises villages, Bat-Kut, Aish Mukam, Seer, Salia, Brar and Manigam. On my visit to this area I found remains of ancient dwellings in villages Panz-mulla and Salia and I believe the headquarters must have been here. Then Martanda desa is referred by the same histo-

rian (Jonaraj). It is modern village Mattan on Srinagar Pahalgam road. The name Mattan occurs in the list of Kashmirian Parganas given by Abul Fazal which indicates that the changes of the name took place during the intervening period. The name Mattan existed during the fourteenth century. But he used the Sanskrit term Martanda in preference to that name. The name of this tehsil was derived from Martanda tirtha and the Martanda temple that stood within its limits. The village round the tirtha is known now as Bavan.

In the neighbourhood of Srinagar about 14 miles away there existed a grand tehsil thickly populated known as Nagrama mentioned by Jonaraj which is modern Nagam village. Its head quarters were village Arigam which is ancient Hadigram of Kalhana. Here was also Buddhist Vihara and this tehsil was the scene of several fights in the chronicler's own time. In its east about five miles there is a small lake known as Nila Naga and Abul Fazal transfers to it the legends of the famous Nilanaga. In the later chronicles it is not clear enough whether Nagam had a tehsil at that time. Here stone inscription dated 1197 A.H. has been unearthed which gives historical importance to this town.

In the neighbourhood of Srinagar on Charari Sharfi road there existed a grand tehsil thickly populated known as Nagrama which is today's Nagam mentioned by Zonaraj and Shrivara. The head quarters were at the village Arigam which has been identified as Hadigram. In the later chronicles we find it is not clear enough whether Nagam had a tehsil at that time or indicated nearly the name of a place. Here a stone inscription dated 1197 A.H. has been unearthed which indicates this tehsil had a great historical importance.

Shrivar gives us an account of two more tehsil. The pre-Muslim period in Maraz of these Dakshinpara is no doubt the ancient name of Dachunpur which was somewhere near present Kiram, Sirhama and Mahaind village in Anantnag district and comprised the villages sallar, Kathsu, Srigupwar and Naushera Villages. The second tehsil was known Isika of Shrivara which represents the modern Yechigam and Gadsathu villages near Airport plateau in Srinagar district.

Jonaraj furnishes us with a few more tehsils. No. 1 is tehsil Shavora whose head quarters were at Payech (Now Payer,



Pulwama) at the foot of a Karewa known as Nongari Udur and at its north-western end contains a well preserved little temple often described by European travellers and an attractive place for tourists. To the north of Shukri tehsil, a tehsil is identified known as tehsil Chirath which extends from the left bank of Jhelum. It was known as Kalhana's Ramoosa and is a considerable village on the high road from Srinagar to Pakhar-pur. Here a great agrahara was founded by Queen Tujna. Here the temple has now been renovated which stands on the road side.

Lokaprakash furnishes us the information about the existence of a tehsil in the valley of Sandran river which now forms pargans of Bringi. It extended from Kokurnag—Hangalgund to Bringi is known as Branga. King Lalitaditya is said to have built a town called Lokpunya now Lokabhawan on Anantnagh Vernagh road 8th mile. Ruins of this town and some old sculptures are extant.

In the district of Karamraja (Kamraj) Kalhana furnishes us the information of a few important tehsils. The first is Lahara which is modern Lar and includes the whole territory drained by the Sindh Nullah and its tributaries in the present day Ganderbal Tehsil. Its identity is suggested by Bhatta Harako's Gloss. On the Lohara tehsil as well as details contained in the passage of later chronicles the tehsil was in flourishing condition during Lohara and later periods.

Shrivara gives us a detailed account of one more tehsil known as Samala. This is also referred in by later chroniclers and in the last book of Raj Tarangni. It is the ancient name of present day Hamal or Rafia-abad in Baramulla District in the west of Sopur. Its head quarters were at Vonagam. In the Lolab valley among historians there is a controversy whether a tehsil existed at all in the pre-Muslim era in this area. There is only a reference in Raj Tarangni with a mention of Laulaha as Visaya.

There is a tehsil of Uttar which is mentioned by early chroniclers and can be ascertained as tehsil Uttarmachi pora (present Handwar) which occupies the northern most part of Kamraz. It had its head quarters in the village Gooshi in the centre of Uttar pargana near the confluence of river Kamil and Lolav stream. It was a starting point for the Sharda

pilgrimage The village is near Kuwara town.

The tehsil Khiya-Srama is the ancient name of Khiyahom pargana which comprises northern shore of Vollar Lake and small valleys and ravines situated therein. Shrivara gives the name of this tehsil as Evenayayasya. The exact location is not known but I believed from the archaeological remains, that it must be the present village of Aalosa and Malangam and Qoiyul Muqam in Bandipur tehsil. Bangil is mentioned as tehsil. It is at present Magam and Tangmarg area. This tehsil has been referred by Shrivara in his chronicles. In its vicinity is Shankervarman's city of Shakerpore known to-day as Pattan. There is no trace of this locality belonging to it except two ruined temples.

Jonaraj supplies the names of two tehsils Bahrupa which is the old name of Beru village. The name is derived from the ancient spring Bahrupa and is referred as Tirtha in Nilmath-puran. It also functions today as tehsil. The other tehsil which is mentioned by Jonaraj owes its name to Zain-ul-Abidin. It comprises the fertile tract between the Vollar lake and the left bank of Nullah Puhar. It is today irrigated by Zaingir canal and is on the road side from Sopore to Watlab hill and comprises the villages of Hardushiva, Warpura, Duru and Dangarpura. The earlier name of this tract cannot be traced out. On my visit to this area I was informed by the locals that this tehsil was densely populated and dwellings were so congested that if a she goat (bakri) climbed on a roof of a house she could not find here way to come down even miles after. This was a story of tehsils whose head quarters are to-day insignificant villages. Margaptj or Tehsildar was incharge in these tehsils. He had both judicial and executive powers and was responsible for law and order and for collection of revenue.

According to Lokaprakash the ancient name of tehsil Kruim was Krodhana visaya. It is the present area through which Jhelum flows immediately before leaving the valley. It extends both sides of the river Jhelum and its greater portion lies on the left bank. The area extended from presents Kreeri village to (Sopore), it is now in Sopur Tehsil. In the west of Ychegam lies the village Dunts or Doonsoo. Its ancient name is possibly Dvaimsal in the Lokaprakash list of Visayas. Abdul Fazal counts it with Kamraz. It is a tehsil of the direct route

from Tosmaidan pass and the Karkota Dranga. These ancient tehsils were centres of trade and commerce. Most of the offices were located at these headquarters, and more light will be thrown if the Archeological deptt. takes the work of excavation in hand at these sites.

### COINAGE IN PRE-MUSLIM KASHMIR

*Ksemendra*, Jonaraja and Shrivara, chroniclers of ancient and medeaval Kashmir tell us that Dinnars were in circulation which state the price of commodities, amounts of salaries etc. it was the currency of the rulers of ancient Kashmir. Tartar (Kushan) rulers like Kanishka, Havishka and Vasudev ruled the valley of Kashmir in early centuries of Christian era. Their rule was fairly well established. The coins issued by these rulers were in actual circulation in Kashmir as media of exchange. It was a bimetallic currency of gold and copper. Since Kashmir was a flourishing trade centre of Northern India and Central Asia, there must have poured into the valley enough gold to enable its rulers to strike gold coins in abundance. This metal naturally facilitated trade with foreign countries as gold has from times immemorial been the medium of international exchange. The coins issued under Kushans were of inferior type in metal. Though these coins have been recovered at different places of Kushan empire but it is certain that these coins were minted in our valley of Kashmir. Next we come to the time of Mihirakula, the Hun king, 5th century A.D. He struck coins in the valley but Mr. Cunningham thinks that one of these types is a copy of Kushan king where in the king is standing on the obverse and the Goddess seated on the reverse with the legend Jayatu Mihirkula which was struck in Kashmir. A large number of coins have been found in the valley which are at present housed in Srinagar Museum and one of these is ascribed to a king named Torman. He issued coins which are generally in copper instead of gold and this continued till the beginning of Karkot rule in 627 A.D. Even though Kashmir had attained great prosperity, we find some coinage of mixed metal which contain gold, silver and copper in different proportions. Some of these coins show that a brisk trade was going on between Kashmir and the rest of



India. The name of Sri Torman in Brahmi character is written on the obverse. There is a mention of a king named Torman in Kalhana's *Raja Tarangni* who was the brother of the ruling monarch. But the Hun king Torman is not known to have ruled over Kashmir. It was his son Mihirkul who came to exercise his sway over the valley and introduce copper coins of his father. During the latter Hun rulers economic condition of the valley worsened. Over land routes were disturbed and closed down. Kashmir became a land locked territory. Trade and commerce came to stand-still. It was detached from the rest of the world. It became an impoverished country. Gold and base gold coins went out of circulation. After the death of Mihirkul 550 A.D. we come to reign of Parversen II 580 A.D. the founder of modern Srinagar, who had again coinage of gold and silver. On the obverse of silver coin, Lakshmi is seated on a lion with a lotus in her left hand, to the right is the word Sri Parvara, on the reverse is king standing, and to the left crescent topped sceptre in left hand. His gold coins are of slightly different type from his silver. The Goddess seated on the lion with lotus in her left hand is described by Mr. Cunningham as Lakshmi is probably to be identified with Goddess of Ambika.

Between the time of Parvansen and the rise of Karkotas 7th century under Durlabhavardhana, founder of the dynasty are to be assigned some of coins of rude workmanship of seated Goddess and standing king type, containing the name Sri Narendra on the obverse and kida on the reverse and another class of coins of the same type with the name Sri Gokna on the obverse and the word Kida on the reverse. Sri Narendra has been identified with a king named Narendraditya Khinkhila mentioned in Kalhana's *Raja Tarangni*. The word Khinkhila reveals his Huna lineage. The founder of Karkot dynasty Duralabhavardhana was also the first member of the family who struck coins in his own name. His coin shows Lakshmi seated as Goddess on the obverse with the legend Sri Durlabhadeva. The reverse shows a rude figure of king standing with the words Jaya and Kidara. His son Pratapaditya struck coins of the same type with the legend Sri Pratapa on the obverse and Kidara on the reverse. His son Lalitaditya Muktapida had a prosperous reign of over thirty six years but he did not strike

coins and kept same copper coins of his father and grand father in circulation. After Lalitaditya the throne of Kashmir went in to the hands of his successors. Jayapida Vinayaditya struck coins in his own name. These were of the usual headless seated Goddess and standing king type. The legend Sri Vinayaditya is written on the obverse and the word Jayati and Kida appear on the reverse. There was great debasement in currency during the reigns of latter Karkot kings, no doubt due to the instable political conditions prevailing in the valley. On the authority of a drama named Agamadambra by Jayanta Bhat a Kashmiri writer who flourished in the Ninth century mentioned that Shankar Verman struck coins containing the name of Yasovarman. This was his another name. He spent most of his days in expeditions in the adjoining regions of his country, in course of which, he might have circulated some of his monetary issues. This period witnessed an era of consolidation, peace and prosperity we find again mixed gold coins in circulation. The copper coinage of Kashmir from Shanker Verman onwards is fixed and stereotyped and its importance is very little. Then we come to the reign of Queen Didda and King Ksemagupta which has interest of its own. They issued coins showing a goddess seated on obverse with a letter Di which is the first syllable of the Queen's name and the letters Ksema which constitute the first part of the kings name occupy the left and right field respectively. The reverse contains the figures of standing king in regal attire ; the word Gupta the latter part of the kings name is written below to right. Kalhana states that king Ksemagupta was so greatly enamoured by his wife Didda that he became known by the appellation Diddāksema. King Yasaskara 930 A.D. carried with him two and half thousand gold pieces when he went to pass his last days in the temple Bijbihara. Harsha Dev 1089 A. D. in the beginning of his reign struck gold and silver coins. His gold coins were of two classes. The obverse of the class one depicts a horseman with lance to right, the legend goes as Harsadeva, A Goddess is seated on the reverse. The second class has on the obverse the legend Sri Harsadeva and on the reverse an elephant to right. Damaras, rich merchants, and nobility were engaged in amassing bullion in the form of heavy ornaments. The latter Lohare kings reverted to the copper coinage. Then



again in 1149 A.D. Jaya-simha struck coins in copper and brass with Jaya on the right and simha on left on the obverse, and in the reverse monogram of lotus. His coins are very rare except one available in Srinagar Museum. After Jayasimha the last coin was struck in Kashmir by king Jagadev 1198 A.D. The coin has been preserved. Apart from political i stability the main reason for withdrawal of gold circulation was the complete breakdown of trade and commerce with the rest of India following the policy of isolation adopted by the latter kings. Bullion ceased to enter the valley and since there was no need of precious metals for settling transactions with outside traders a few remaining gold coins seem to have gone out of circulation.

During the reign of Anantdev, acquisition of gold was the popular form of investment. Sussala is recorded to have transmitted gold treasure to his own treasury in the Lohara castle in order to hoard there the wealth that he collected by oppressive fiscal system. In Damodaragupta's *Kuttanimita Kavya* and Kalhana's *Raja Tarangni* there are many instances of the use of gold ornaments. But from the 9th century onwards whatever the gold Kashmiris possessed they seem to have kept either in the form of bullion ornaments. There is no evidence that gold coins were in actual circulation.

Besides metallic coins, cowries shells were used in daily transaction. The use of cowries shells prevailed upto Jonaraj's time (15th century). Cowries shell had been used in almost all part of India from a remote period. When metallic coins were not invented, it was the principal medium of exchange in daily transaction. But sometimes it was found to be current side by side with gold, silver and copper coins. If Ksemendra is to be believed in the eleventh century A.D. cowries were used in daily transaction. The lowest denomination of the prevailing currency of the same time was varataka (cowries shell). Another medium of exchange in early Kashmir was Paddy or 'Dhani' which we still observe in the rural areas of Kashmir. From the pages of *Raja Tarangni* we come to know that in the 9th century the land revenue in Kashmir was collected in the form of 'Dhani' (paddy) which was even in use upto 1953 A.D. when Mujwaza system—procurement of paddy was abolished. In the Lokaprakasha it is quite evident that 'Khar' of 'Dhani' (amount of 2



maunds of paddy) was fixed in quantities which was used for payments of rents, fines, wages etc. and are said to have been equivalent to 'dinaras'. The evidence of Kalhana coupled with the testimony of Lakaprakash is undoubtedly clear that 'Dhani' or paddy was the medium of exchange in some periods of Kashmir history. 'Singhar Nuts' were also in use of medium of exchanges. Government servants were also paid their salaries in kind, which continued upto time 1903 A.D. and the centres of distribution were known as 'Dolgens'. Thus 'Dhani' was the main medium of exchange. It was an essential commodity and was acceptable to all. It had the quality of being divisible in the minutest portions. In a slightly later stage of economic life cowries were in use.

From the coins the general economic condition of the people in the valley can be examined. Under Kushan rule Kashmir shared the prosperity of the great empire when bi-mettalic currency prevailed. The over land trade routes were open which enriched the valley and raised her economic standard to high level. It was during this flourishing period that the Roman gold being ultimately transformed into minted Kushan coins became current in Kashmir. The gold coins were adopted for carrying on trade with foreign countries. Foreign countries did not accept anything except gold. Copper coins were the medium of exchange in local transaction. From the 9th century onwards there is no evidence that gold coins were in actual circulation. The reason of withdrawal of gold coins is not far to seek, when trade with foreign countries came to stand still due to instability, gold coins were no longer required. Whatever little trade was going on it could be paid back by gold bullions and as for as Indian territory were concerned with cowrie shells as well. It is clear from the beginning of 10th century onwards Kashmir had a coinage of copper only. Copper was extracted and minted into coins in the valley. It is not certain that there were gold mines in the valley. There was probably none. All gold appears to have poured from outside by the way of trade and commerce. Another cause for the withdrawal of gold coins from the markets of Kashmir from the 10th century onwards must be sought in the operation of the general economic law—which declares when coins of more than one metal are in circulation

the coins of the less valuable metal invariably drive away the coins of the more valuable metal from the market. In other words bad money always drives away the good. During the Karkota period copper coins sometimes even in later times were in circulation in Kashmir side by side with mixed metal coins, which had in them an appreciable quantity of gold. The disturbed economic state of the country during the last Karkota regime witnessed the proper linking of the coins of two different metals coming to end as a result of which mixed metal coins came to be appreciated in preference to the copper coins.

### **Social and economic conditions**

We are very unfortunate that our ancestors have left little information on the social and economic conditions of ancient Kashmir. Early works like Nilamat Puran, Dhamodharagupta's Kuttanmata Kavya and several works of the poet Ksemendra mentioned Brahmanas distinctly as the upper caste of the people but do not mention anything about other social castes. We have therefore to depend mainly on Kalhana's Raja Tarangni which testifies to the existence of several castes especially low among the population of Kashmir besides Brahmanas. There were Nishads (modern Hanji) Kiratas, the Karvartas, the Dombas, the Svapakas and Chandals. But the adamant rigidity, which marked the caste system in India was absent in Kashmir in toto. Perhaps this was due to the influence of Buddhism which flourished here quite early. No wonder we find in the history of this country men and women belonging to low castes occupying positions of trust and responsibility. Under Cakravarman for instance the Dombas filled all the important posts in the court. Two of his queens also belonged to this caste. There is another point which is to be noted is the absence of such castes as Kshatriyas, Viasas and Sudras. The conception of four traditional castes were unknown in Kashmir.

The Brahmanas were more privileged and honoured than any other castes. The origin of Brahmanism in the valley is unknown. It is presumed that most of the Brahmanas were brought from Gandhara region and other parts of India and were made to settle in the valley. There have been several large

scale immigrations of the Brahmanas from the plains of India into the valley of Kashmir. Brahmanas and their decendants immigrants have composed the bulk of Brahmanas population of Kashmir. "The Brahmanas from other part of India had come to live in Kashmir by the time of Ashoka—3rd century B.C." Raja Tarangni refers to Brahmanas who came to Kashmir from Aryadesha. The country was the abounding happiness for them. The occupations pursued by them were varied. A vast majority of them was engaged in the studies of scriptures and the calling of priests and teachers. Some of them joined government service and worked not only in civil but also in the military departments. Some of them were ministers and councilors of the state. Thus we see that the Brahmanas Mistrsarman was the chief minister of Lalatadatiya—Devasarman a minister of Jayapada, and Phalguna, the Chief minister of Didda were all Kashmir Brahmanas. Damodoragupta was the minister of Jayapada also. The military career also was open to the Kashmiri Brahmanas. Bhujanga the son of a Brahman Samanta fought with Sangramraja. Kalhana's father Canpaka was the dvārpatā of Harshadev. Aiyaka, Lavaraaja, were the Brahmanas minister of Salhana who died in the battlefield while fighting against Sussala. Kalyanaraja was a Brahmana soldier—was well versed in the military exercise. But though many Kashmir Brahmanas adopted political and military vocations, the majority of them appear to have earned their livelihood by performing Puja Patha.

They received sacrificial for their fees rites. The main source of income of Kashmiri Brahman was the revenue derived from the land grants or Agrahars donated by the kings and queens and other rich people. It is therefore clear that Brahmanas in Kashmir were mainly dependent on land and thus formed a class of small landlords. The Nilamatapurāṇa considers it meritorious act if some one gave them gifts on a religious ceremony. The temple priests also pocketed the revenue of the villages which belonged to the temples. sometimes they sold flowers, incense, etc., (Amrit, Rattan Deep) to persons going to temples for worship (R.T., V, 168) Ksemendra furnishes us with the information that at times sweets, rice, salt and cash etc., which were offered to the god of the temple were resold to the public by priests.



Rajputs (Rajaputras) are also referred to by Kalhan in his work but these are very few.

Tantrains now converts to Islam, Ekangas and Lavanyas (Luns) are also referred as tribes of professional soldiers who formed later on into formidable groups virtually acted as king makers. They are now Muslims in Kashmir society and have been mentioned in detail elsewhere by the author.

Nishadas were probably the aboriginal tribes. They occupied a very low position in the social hierarchy. They earned their livelihood by following such profession as hunting and fishing. It is said they have been brought from Singapur (ancient Sangal Dip) into the valley. A passage from the Rajatarangini points out that they are boatmen of the valley (R.T.V, 101). They are now Muslims by faith and have improved their economic status since 1947. A.D. The Kiratas, was another low caste as mentioned by Kalhana. They lived in the forests and made their both ends meet by killing wild animals by raising jungle-fire. They are today Shikaries and still live near the mountains and have taken to various other callings.

But racially the Kiratas mentioned in Sanskrit literature belonged to the Tibeto-Burman group. Hiuen Tsang refers to a class of low born people named Ki-lo-to people who lived in Kashmir from a very early time and were opposed to Bauddhas.

The Dombas were caste of menials as mentioned by Kalhana. They associated sometimes with Candales. Their professions included hunting, singing and dancing. Kalhana also calls them Svapakas, a term which means 'dog-cocker'. It is interesting to know that in 11th century A.D., Alberuni saw among the low caste of northern India a community called Badhatou who actually ate the flesh of dog. The Dombas were hated as low caste.

Another low caste in ancient Kashmir were Candalas. Some of them were engaged as royal body-guards or as watchmen. According to Alberuni, the Candalas of north India practice as a trade, killing of persons when they were sentenced to the death. Both Alberuni and Kalhana point out that the Candalas were universally hated.

### Classes of People

The structure of Kashmir society was based on the private ownership of wealth and property. The wealth itself was produced by the three principle methods of production i.e. agriculture, industry and trade. But though the till of the soil produced crops, the duty of proper distribution rested upon the royal authority or feudal aristocrates, who were owners of lands, where the industry and the trade were in the hands of merchants. But there were other classes too who neither took any direct part in the production of wealth nor did anything towards its distribution but who served the society in their own occupational capacities as soldiers, clerks, the cultural and the menial etc.

Connected with land., was the class of people called Damara, who as noted earlier played an important role in the history of Kashmir. The exact meaning of the term Damara is not known. Ksemendra, Kalhana, Jonaraja and Srivara no doubt frequently refer to the term but never try to explain its meaning. Prof. Wilson is of opinion that the Damaras were a fierce tribe inhabiting the mountains of the north Kashmir, whereas their original etymological meaning is as 'riotous', 'rebel'. But according to Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* the Damaras were not necessarily a tribe inhabiting the mountains north of Kashmir, neither they were always riotous. They seem to have derived their power from large holdings of land. This argument is supported by the fact that their seats of power lay in highly productive parts of Kashmir valley. Therefore they were territorial lords or feudal land-owners.

Kalhana's first reference occurs in the fourth Taranga of his work, where Lalitaditya is shown advising his officers and successors not to leave with the cultivators of the land more than what is necessary for their bare sustenance and the tillage of their fields. Because, if they should keep more wealth, they would become in a single year very formidable Damaras, and strong enough to neglect the commands of the king". It is quite clear from this passage that agriculturist villagers, after the acquisition of considerable lands, were transformed into powerful Damaras.

In spite of Lalitaditya's warning, the growth and development of rural economy and the weakness of the royal

authority gradually led to the rise of the Damaras who became a very powerful element in the state. During the reign of Avantivarman, one of these Damaras, Dhanva, is said to have usurped the villages endowed to the temple of Bhutesvara in present day ganderbas tehsil. This man, who owed his predominance to the patronage of the minister Suravarman, flatly refused his summons. Finally when he appeared before the minister, he made the earth shake with the tramp of his host of foot soldiers and did not bend his back (R.T.V. 51-60).

About the middle of the 10th century the Damaras began to interfere in the day to day administration. King Cakravarman, when driven away by the Tantrins, took shelter in the house of Damara Lo Samgrama and with the help of Samgrama and other Samaras succeeded in recovering his throne. But after sometime, when Cakravarman did not satisfy the Damaras, he was ultimately slain by these turbulent feudal chiefs.

In the beginning of the 11th century, the Damaras became supreme in the country and had their say in all the affairs of the state. Whether he was the reigning ruler or an aspirant to the throne, their support was must for him.

In the civil war between King Anant Dev and his son Kalasa Dev and between Utkarsa and Harsa, the Damaras took the side of one or other and final issue of the conflict depended mostly on their support. Ananta Dev, Kalasa Dev and Harsa Dev tried to curb the powers of these feudal barons by dispatching armies against them but all their efforts were set at naught. By the 12th century they became very powerful and had enormous wealth, a large army and strongholds in many important places of the valley (R.I. VIII 254, VIII 648, 929, 1124, 1153, 2505). They usurped all power in the land except in the immediate vicinity of the capital and the places guarded by the royal troops.

Damaras had fortified residences which were like the castle of medieval feudal lords, centres of territorial divisions in which they had a control of more than a couple of villages. The king could not assert except by armed forces in case of rebellion and this state of affairs continued till the advent of Muslims in Kashmir.

With the increase of wealth and political power the



Damaras obtained a higher status in the society. Though Kalhana looks upon them with contempt as 'resembling goblins' or 'more like cultivators though they carry arms'. the marriage of the Damars girls with members of the royal family or of Rajput princesses with Damaras chiefs clearly indicate their elevated social position.

Succession among them seems to have been hereditary, for we find that when Damara died, his landed estates automatically passed to his children. But status of the Damara could also be achieved with the acquisition of lands and riches by other methods.

Some of the Damaras are said to have obtained revenue from their land apparently though this, was not the only source of their income. There were enterprising Damaras who accumulated wealth by trade and commerce. (R.T. VII 495-I bid). Damaras were distributed all over Kashmir mostly on the fertile areas like Nilasva, modern Holada (Tral, Avantipor), Smala (Hamal-Rafibed-Baramulla).

Lavanyas are also called Damaras and most probably they lived as tribe on the mountain side of north of Kashmir. The mountain was known as Lavanya parvata, contiguous to the valley and ultimately settled in Kashmir. They attained position of Damaras during the reign of Harsh and afterwards.

What lay at the bottom of the rise and growth of Damaras is matters of a controversy but it sometimes is said that the weakness of the royal authority and the constant war of succession between the rival claimants to the throne were generally responsible for the rise and growth of these unruly people. No doubt; the internecine conflicts for succession to the throne offered a golden opportunity to the Damaras to increase and exert their power.

Since the royal authority in Kashmir was weak and economic structure of the society supported the existence of the Damaras class and gave a strong impetus to their growth. Since Kashmir was a flourishing commercial centre during Kushan period, when the overland routes had been opened through Central Asia, she served as an important trade emporium. But the trade routes were closed after the down fall of Kushan. Kashmir became a land locked territory and the rulers of Kashmir followed the policy of "isolation"; she now

followed the whole hearted attention on agriculture. Thus greater importance was attached to agriculture coupled with the existence of particular land tenure system, in which the cultivator was a tenant to his feudal lords, seems to have served as the basis of an economic system in which the rise of a landed aristocracy was inevitable. Whatever little trade was carried on with the western neighbours after the Hun invasion had subsided, again came to an end with the rise of the Islam. Both Ou-Kong and Alberuni testify to the closing of some of the existing trade routes. With trade and commerce further curtailed, land became the principal source for wealth. Increase of the population and scarcity of cultivable lands in the valley brought more and more pressure upon the existing agricultural land.

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